

MINUTES
Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuges
Regular Board Meeting
Monday, November 5, 2012, 10:00 a.m.

Attending: Peg Hall, Russ Hall, Jay Bushnell, Bob Hudson, Mark Gluckman, Carmelo Echeverria, John McPherson, John Thalacker, Ed DeHaan, Richard Hermann,
Staff: Andrew Gude, Larry Woodward, Pam Darty
Guests: Greg Lang, Joan Stephens, Jane Connors, Roger McDaniels, Jim Hess, Joan Stevens

Call to Order.

Meeting convened at 10:00 a.m. by Peg Hall, Chair.

Approval Items.

1. Minutes from August 27, 2012 Board Meeting.

Motion to Accept: Mark Gluckman. Second: Bob Hudson. Passed unanimously.

2. Treasurer's Report.

A treasurer's report was provided by Jerry Salamon, Treasurer. Motion to accept: Mark Gluckman. Second: John Thalacker. Passed unanimously.

3. The date for next meeting: Monday, December 3, 2012. Approved by consensus.

Discussion and Decision Items.

1. Great Suwannee River Cleanup. Date: Saturday December 1, 2012. Time: 10:00 to 1:00. Locations: Camp Azalea, Fowlers Bluff, and Suwannee. Jay and Richard are doing advanced preparations. Andrew will be handling supplies and dumpsters for Fowlers Bluff, and Jay is working on getting boats for the Bluff and has prepared some handouts. Andrew stressed the need for boats. Jay stated that he has prepared sign-up sheets, maps, and guidelines for the cleanup, and asked that people doing sign-in get the phone numbers of volunteers. Discussion ensued about who will be at each site. Bob offered his boat if needed, and Andrew will be working on getting additional boats. Pam will take care of

getting supplies from Terry Skiles. Volunteers with boats should try to be there by 9:30 a.m. Jay will make contact with Treasure Camp. Peg will check on scales to way trash.

2. Friends Annual Meeting.

It was decided by consensus that the meeting would be held on March 16, 2013.

A discussion about getting a speaker ensued with Peg suggesting that the speaker should be entertaining and have a connection to refuge. Jay suggested the shark speaker from Mote Marine, Nick Whitney, who came last year, to speak about the relationship between sharks and shellfish. Andrew suggested the new directors at UF Marine Lab on Seahorse: Brian Sillman and Jennifer Seavey, to focus on marshes and suggested the possibility of a panel of speakers. Mark Gluckman suggested someone regarding the water initiative, e.g., Bob Graham. Peg reiterated that should have a direct refuge link. It was decided by consensus that Jay will talk with Peg about where to go next.

The silent auction was discussed and the consensus of the board is that it is a good idea to do. Jay stated that Donna would be willing to handle again, but she needed volunteers to help.

John T raised the question whether to charge for dinner. Discussion ensued about whether the free meal should be used to attract people to the meeting and learn about the refuge. Peg noted that many people renew their memberships at this meeting, and suggested that charging might interfere with this.

John T raised the question whether we have outgrown our space. After discussion, it was suggested that we could use a tent to accommodate more people.

3. Interagency Events

Peg noted that FWS policy is now that all refuges should use paddling as a way to promote refuges, and she sent out paddling festival as information on how it could be done. Friends may be asked to serve on a panel, and Peg has provided emails about this. Andrew noted the connection between this and the 50th Anniversary of the Wilderness Act, and that we should offer to participate. Peg's goal is to get Friends more visibility in the area of promoting refuges through paddling. Peg will check into it once more.

Andrew discussed the Cooperator's Lunch to be attended by sister agencies, key individuals, local governments, chambers of commerce, university, etc. The date

for this year is January 24, 2012, 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., at the Refuge headquarters. About 100 people usually attend. Friends has chipped in the past and \$400 is in the budget for 2013. The budget committee will bring recommendation on this at the December meeting. Discussion ensued about the details of the lunch.

4. Inventory Committee.

Carmelo reported that he has updated the inventory and created a form for keeping a running inventory, so there will not be a need to prepare an inventory after every event. Should use the form whenever inventory is used for an event. Carmelo will establish a minimum stock level for each item, and noted that we will need to address the need for additional t-shirts. Peg noted that Jim Wilson shirts sold better at arts festival to non-members, while members prefer Friends t-shirts. Joan said that Friends can talk to Jim Wilson in Gainesville and probably get whatever type of shirt Friends would like.

Seafood festival: It was reported that we went through many of the refuge give-aways--maps, coloring books, etc. Andrew stated that the Refuge will order more. No need for Friends to help financially with this. Jay noted that we should have refuge pins for visitors to take away because many visitors liked to collect them. Pam said they could do that.

5. Mandated committees

Nominating (Jay, Bob, Greg, Roger): Jay reported that the committee will meet after this meeting at Treasure Camp. Richard has agreed to re-up as a board member. Jerry has asked to be removed from board and as treasurer.

Financial Review (Richard, Carmelo, Bob, Jerry as ex officio): A meeting will be called and the Committee will report back.

Budget (Russ, John T, Ed, Jerry as ex officio): A meeting will be called and report back to board about setting priorities and what we want to do as an organization. Will try to get a report out about before the next. Any ideas should be provided to budget committee. Peg agreed that we need to use budget discussion to determine what we should be doing and how to be more effective.

Information Items.

1. Refuge Update

Pam reported on the grand opening of the classroom. Dawn brought birds of prey, and many children and parents attended. There was a hayride, scavenger hunt, ribbon cutting, and a lesson on water quality testing. It was well publicized except in the Chiefland Citizen which hasn't printed anything yet. Peg suggested posting on the website. Pam reported that all went really well with the home school groups attending.

Larry reported that this region is focusing on gopher tortoise research. There will be a regional strike team and we may be first to have an initial trial done. Will let Friends know if any help is needed.

Larry reported that the Dennis Creek boardwalk is about finished. It was done in-house and new composite decking was placed on all boardwalks. Some decking was washed off of Atsena Otie pier by the storms, but staff was able to make repairs.

Larry reported that hunts are going on; right now is the gun hunt. Hunter numbers are down drastically, and the harvest is down. A discussion ensued on why the numbers are down. John T suggested that the Refuge put up signs letting the public know that hunting going on. Larry noted that new signs will be going up stating that the Nature Drive and non-Dixie mainline roads will start being closed at night. Larry reported that no chronic disease was found in last year's deer study, and that youth and family hunts are coming up. Youth Hunt: only youth can hunt-must be with a parent. Family Hunt: adult can hunt but must have youth with them. Larry reported that these should be good high quality hunts, and youth will be allowed to take does.

Andrew reported on the following:

-He met with the Dixie County Commission to report on the Refuge and thank the Commission for its support. He is moving towards working with 5 private landowners in Dixie County lying between Suwannee and St. Marks refuges.

-He will be meeting with Dixie County chamber of commerce later this week to report on the Refuge and thank for support.

-Shired Island dock: County got money from the state to put in a better dock at Shired Island. The new dock is safer and provides good viewing platform.

-Paddle festival: The Friends are thanked for its support for this great event.

Looking forward to next year in Cedar Key.

- Fall-winter-spring forestry fire season will begin soon. Being more strategic about planting and fire because fire money has been lost from regional and national offices. There will be smaller crews and smaller burns.
- Long leaf pine and wiregrass will be planted on 23 acres, and volunteers may be needed.
- The new administrative assistant, Christina Diaz, is being trained and is working out well.
- Would like to get in front of Cedar Key Chamber and Levy County Chamber, and may have to approach them.
- Possible donation by Florida's Nature Coast Conservancy, Inc. Andrew is working with the group about a possible donation of a large tract of mainly submerged lands. Andrew stated that his goal is to find way for Refuge to integrate with conservation and economic development, especially aquaculture, and would like to use refuge resources to support aquaculture.
- He attended the South Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative, which has the purpose of aligning all willing and interested parties to promote common conservation goals. The conservation community needs a conservation plan for important areas. The goal is to work with all willing partners to be more proactive and to prepare conservation plans and make them known.
- The Refuge may be getting a new EPA-compliant shooting range for local and regional law enforcement.
- The Refuge is looking at building a new pole barn to get all equipment under roof.
- He met with SRWMD regarding the Atsena Otie dock which all agreed will not likely last more than 2 more years. He will continue to work with WMD to decide what to do. Feels that the dock is not a WMD priority to re-build. There will be a public planning process for what to do about the dock.
- The Refuge got a contract to remove exotic species from refuge islands around Cedar Key.
- The Refuge received DOT funding to repave road into office and parking areas, and the river walk parking area.

2. Hidden Coast Paddling Festival.

Mark reported that the festival was a tremendous success. The number of paddlers was about 85, and all went on multiple paddles so there was a great deal of exposure to the Refuge. The numbers of volunteers is hard to estimate; the paddlers all seemed very happy and provided positive responses. Due to injury to the speaker, the festival did not include the photography portion, and there were not many wildlife encounters. Refuge staff all did a great job, and helped with a wide variety of festival activities. The low country boil was great

and was attended by about 115 people. There was good economic impact on Suwannee, with Salt Creek restaurant reporting a big boost.

Jane Connors reported that there were two types of paddlers: those who wanted to do long paddles, and those that wanted to go slow to look at wildlife. She suggested that they may want to do both long paddles and slow paddles with interpreters. Peg reported that there was a volunteer offering to help us if we wanted to have a kayak race.

Peg reported that the Friends booth was at the festival, with a lot of contact with people, resulting in 3 new members, and many others taking membership forms. Mark noted that the Friends contribution was budgeted at \$300 this year for the brunch at Salt Creek Restaurant; but only \$120 was spent: 60 people at \$2 each subsidy. Mark said he felt it was a good investment, with reaffirmation that we have world-class paddling venues. There are many paddlers looking for places to paddle, and there was good promotion with e-communications. Mark stated his conclusion that the paddling initiative will work to attract paddlers, but that we need to discuss where to take it from here. He noted that it did not result in very many new members of Friends, and it is not clear that paddlers can be converted to members or supporters of Friends.

The festival next year will be in Cedar Key on October 11-13, and Friends should support. The lead agency will be the Levy County Tourist Development Agency.

3. Cedar Key Seafood Festival

Peg reported that the Festival was very successful in conjunction with the Seahorse open house, but may want to think about doing something else with regard to the booth. She noted that it is hard to get volunteers, and she wonders whether it is the best use of Friends time. The booth brought in \$400. Mark stated that we need more participation by members in festivals, and may need to establish partnerships with Cedar Key groups. There are not enough individuals on Friends board to accomplish everything. Joan stated that she thinks that more effort is needed to get members involved, for example by getting more information out and make more direct contact.

Andrew reported that it his commitment to opening the lighthouse more to the public, and that it will be open 5 times before 1st of year. The Refuge is working on a new arrangement between the Refuge and UF. The Refuge will be considering opening up the lighthouse for 12 days next year, but will need to think carefully about how to do it. Might consider opening it up just for

conservation and research and less about historical—e.g. no re-enactors, on certain occasions.

4. Communication Report. Peg provided a verbal and written report. She reported that she is not happy with the paddling website—how static it is—and would like input. She suggested the possibility of finding an intern to help.
5. Membership Report. Kirby not present, but Peg reported 3 new members and new life time membership, Ms. Rogers, who should be thanked.
6. Nature Walks: John T. agreed to do again.
7. CK Library Lectures: Need suggestions as to who to get for speakers. John T offered to call a meeting about setting up speakers.
8. Kiosk: Jay reported that the Cedar Key Kiosk is done and looks good, and that we need to think about one at Suwannee and River Walk. John T agreed to help with keeping the Cedar Key kiosk updated if people send him materials.
9. Birding: John T will talk to someone about designating Cedar Key and the Refuge as a prime birding location. Andrew stated that he is very interested in pursuing this.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:00 noon.

Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Key NWRs
 Actual Versus Budget
 10 Month Actual Results versus Annual Budget

	2012 actual thru 10/31	Annual Budget
Cash Receipts		
Memberships	3,618.60	2,000.00
Donations	1,950.00	2,000.00
Sales (\$406 in paddling panel forfeits)	2,512.00	1,000.00
Total cash receipts	8,080.60	5,000.00
 Cash Disbursements		
support lower suwannee & cedar key nwrs		
<i>Allocated Items</i>		
Communications	468.05	800.00
Annual meeting (food, supplies, honorarium)	591.09	500.00
Butterfly garden	19.13	50.00
River trail identification	40.31	100.00
Other Allocated items		400.00
<i>Unallocated items</i>		
Paddling panel postage	9.51	1,700.00
sub-total	1,128.09	3,550.00
 support refuge-initiated activities		
<i>Allocated Items</i>		
Refuge summer program (2011)	78.72	
Refuge summer program (2012)	100.00	200.00
Other allocated items		400.00
<i>Unallocated items</i>		
sub-total	178.72	1,100.00
 support national wildlife system		
<i>Allocated</i> (NWR Association Membership)		150.00
sub-total		150.00
 administrative & fundraising support		
<i>Allocated Items</i>		
Florida Department of Revenue	192.36	200.00
Purchase of inventory	2,278.55	1,800.00

sub-total	<u>2,470.91</u> <u>2,000.00</u>
Total cash disbursements	<u><u>3,777.72</u></u> <u><u>6,800.00</u></u>

Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys NWRs
Treasurer's Report
For the Period January 1 thru October 31, 2012

	Year to date
Cash Receipts	
Memberships	3,618.60
Donations	1,950.00
Sales (includes paddling panel sales \$406)	<u>2,512.00</u>
Total cash receipts	<u><u>8,080.60</u></u>
Cash Disbursements	
support lower suwannee & cedar key nwrs	
Communications	468.05
Annual meeting (food, supplies, honorarium)	591.09
Butterfly garden	19.13
River trail identification	40.31
Paddling panel mailing cost	<u>9.51</u>
sub-total	<u><u>1,128.09</u></u>
support refuge-initiated activities	
Refuge summer program (2011)	78.72
Refuge summer program (2012)	<u>100.00</u>
sub-total	<u><u>178.72</u></u>
administrative & fundraising support	
Florida Department of Revenue	192.36
Purchase of inventory	<u><u>2,278.55</u></u>

sub-total	<u>2,470.91</u>
Total cash disbursements	<u>3,777.72</u>
Excess of receipts over disbursements	4,302.88
Cash Balance beginning of period	<u>10,529.29</u>
Cash Balance 10/31/2012	<u><u>14,832.17</u></u>
The cash balance consists of two components	
Operating fund	6,097.88
Long term reserve	<u>8,734.29</u>
Total	<u><u>14,832.17</u></u>