

**Minutes
Board Meeting
Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Keys National Wildlife Refuges
Thursday, May 14, 2014**

Present:

Board Members: Bob McKinstry, Bob Hudson, Maria Sgambati, Debbie Meeks, Libby Cagle, Roger McDaniel, Bill Kilborn, Jay Bushnell, Sherry Beauchamp, John McPherson.

Refuge Staff: Larry Woodward, Pam Darty.

Guests: Kit Lane, Robin Gillies, Jerry Everett, David Meeks.

1. The meeting was convened at 10:04 a.m. by Bob Hudson, Chair.
2. Approval of Minutes of the April 17, 2014, Board Meeting. **Motion** by Maria Sgambati to approve the minutes as submitted. **Second** by Sherry Beauchamp. Passed by unanimous vote.
3. New Board Member. Maria Sgambati provided a brief resume of Jaime Jerrels who attended the last board meeting. Maria expressed the opinion that Jaime would be a good addition to the board given her local ties and her work with Farm Bureau. **Motion** by Maria Sgambati to add Jaime Jerrels to the Board. **Second** by Bob McKinstry. Passed unanimous vote.
4. Refuge Update.

Larry Woodward provided the following information:

- Many firefighting staff are off in other areas so not much burning going on at this time.
- FWS is in the process of purchasing a 200-acre portion of the Panther Ridge parcel lying on the south side of Shell Mound road. FWS does not have funds to purchase the larger remaining parcel on the north side of the road. It would appear as though Rick Thompson from Gainesville is interested in buying the property to add it to the mitigation bank he is attempting to create in the Cedar Key area.
- The law enforcement position is still vacant, and the Refuge has asked for permission to fill position with a waiver from the freeze on hiring. No word yet on whether the waiver will be granted.
- The Refuge is working with UF researchers doing a drone study of Seahorse Key. Excellent people are working on the project and the information should be very valuable especially with regard to bird populations and nesting. Maria Sgambati and her group are cooperating with this project.

- Two interns have been hired for the summer.
- There are residents of Dixie County with concerns about hunting. Refuge representatives appeared before the Dixie County Commission to discuss amount of hunting on the Refuge, pointing out that there is more hunting on this Refuge than any other, but people in Dixie County want more, especially hog hunting.
- Refuge staff are continuing to participate in Seahorse Key open houses, with a focus on promoting the Refuge.

Pam Darty reported that:

- Volunteers Roger McDaniel, Donna Thalacker, and Ron Black continue to do excellent volunteer work and have been written up in the press.
- The summer camp and Cedar Key School programs have been organized.

5. Volunteer Services Agreements. Pam Darty asked that each Friends Board member sign the Volunteer Services Agreement. Board members will need to do this only once. The agreement protects volunteers from liability, injury, etc. when working on the Refuge.
6. Emails and Facebook: Kit Lane has volunteered to handle Facebook, email, etc. for this summer.
7. Old Business:
 - a. Volunteer Hours. Board members need to use the volunteer hour form that Allan Pither sent out.
 - b. Summer Intern Update. Bob Hudson reported that there is no need to address at this time the question whether the Friends should help with paying the interns, but that the general feeling of the Board is that we should help if we can.
 - c. Cedar Key Kiosk. Jay Bushnell reported that the Cedar Key kiosk is holding up pretty well, but will be taken down eventually. Bob Hudson agreed to check with Greg Lang to get a status report. Jay noted the need to change the P.O. box on the signs.
8. Review & Discussion of 2014 Initiatives. In addition to the written report attached, the following updates were provided:

Art: Maria Sgambati reported that there will be another artist in residence at Seahorse Key to help create an interface between science and art.

Dixie County Enhancements: Debbie Meeks reported that work is progressing on kiosk and signs.

Dixie County Refuge Expansion: Larry Woodward reported that work is continuing and things are looking good.

Education Enhancements: Maria Sgambati reported that there was a Levy County teachers work day and workshop on May 9th at Seahorse Key which was very successful and many teachers want to use Seahorse in their curriculum.

Gateway Signage: John McPherson reported that work is continuing on finalizing an interlocal agreement between the Refuge and Florida's Nature Coast Conservancy to bring the "Section 29" property within the Refuge and to install appropriate signage.

Paddling Project: Debbie Meeks reported that more tearsheets have been ordered.

Refuge Restoration Projects: Roger McDaniel reported that an \$8,500 grant request was sent in so that he can continue with pepper busting. Larry Woodward stated that the Refuge is also working on grant opportunities and funding, and that longleaf pine and red cedar restoration will continue this summer, but mostly with machines rather than volunteers.

Science–Inventories and Surveys of Refuge Biota: Bob Hudson asked the Board members to review Russ Hall's proposal that he sent out by email for discussion at the next meeting.

Trail Guides: Bill Kilborn reported that the Barnett Creek guide has been completed and is at the printer with 500 copies to be printed. He also reported that they are nearly finished with the Turkey Foot trail guide, and that some people are working on a butterfly trail that will show good locations for specific species of butterflies.

Advocacy and Networking: Jay Bushnell reported that he sent letters to Congress in support of funding for Refuges, and noted that the springs initiative and other conservation efforts have positive economic impacts. He reported that Friends has been invited to participate in the sturgeon conference and that he thinks we should and that he will get back to the Board regarding volunteers. Maria Sgambati asked about a strategy for sending out letters with multiple signers and the possibility of bringing letters to the meetings for Friends board members to sign was discussed

9. Larry Woodward reported that there is a new Fish & Wildlife Service Policy on Friends Organizations, and a new Agreement Template that the Friends group needs to review.

10. Reports:

- a. Treasurer's Report. Libby Cagle submitted a written report, attached, and asked that Board members submit any outstanding requests for reimbursement.
- b. Communications & Publications Committee Report. Bill reported that he is continuing to work with Peg on email and website issues as discussed at the last meeting. Maria Sgambati asked about how many brochures should be published

and where they should be distributed. It was agreed that a list should be prepared showing where the brochures are being distributed. Bill reported that he is looking into publishing the paddling guides on waterproof paper. Jay Bushnell asked if an Ibis was going to be sent out in September, and it was agreed that it should go out as it has in the past, i.e., with an emailed and mailed version.

- c. Membership Update and Membership Tracking: Debbie Meeks reported that she is waiting for final decisions on the website so that she can coordinate the membership program with the website.

With no further business to conduct, the meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

2014 Projects/Initiatives – As of March, 20, 2014	Actions Needed in 2014	2013 Budget Allocation	Friends Champion(s)	LACKNWR Champion(s)
Art: work with local artists to highlight artistic values of the refuges (exhibition? competition?)	Develop an art day at refuges including inducements for artists' participation?	\$250	Ann Kamzelski, Ed DeHaan	1. Pam Darty 2. Andrew Gude
Dixie County Enhancements – improve visibility of refuges and participation of locals in refuge activities	Membership drive; activities (e.g. Dixie Mainline cleanup); engage officials re: information kiosk <u>The Dixie Mainline panel is in final review with Refuge staff (April 17)</u>	\$250	Debbie Meeks	1. Pam Darty 2. Larry Woodward
Dixie County Refuge Expansion – planning; negotiating easements with large landowners	Work with Andrew to identify, approach, and negotiate with key stakeholders	\$50	Greg Lang	Andrew Gude
Education Enhancements – improve outreach to schools; bring students to the refuges	Develop a series of educational events at the refuges targeted at children, families, and seniors. • <u>Children's paddling grant proposal?</u> <u>Maria is hosting a Levy County teacher science initiative at SK Marine Lab on May 9. Purpose is to introduce middle and high school biology teachers to the Marine Lab and build relationships. Maria is working on a grant proposal for children's educational programs at the Marine Lab. (April 17)</u>	\$100	Sherry Beauchamp, Maria Sgambati	Pam Darty
Gateway Signage	Work with community leaders to develop signage highlighting key asset role of refuges <u>John reported that a MOU between the Nature Coast Conservancy and the LSNWR has been given to Refuge staff for review.</u>	\$250	John McPherson	Andrew Gude
Paddling Project – Develop new paddling routes; panels	Keep friends informed of needs; develop Cedar Key guides, distribute guides to community outlets	\$1,500	Russ & Peg Hall	1. Andrew Gude 2. Larry Woodward
Refuge Restoration Projects: invasive species removal, tree planting, etc.	Identify projects; coordinate volunteers; disseminate information. <u>Roger reported that a huge number of Brazilian Pepper bushes have been removed from the Refuge, with many volunteers participating. Roger is preparing a \$10K grant proposal to submit to FWS by May 1. Larry reported that a State of Florida</u>	TBD	Roger McDaniels	?

		grant is possible. Eradication work will resume this fall.			
River Trail Enhancements – Friends may be able to leverage significant funds for ADA compliance	Identify potential sources of outside funding; develop conceptual plan John requested that Refuge staff find a source for determining what would be required for the River Trail to be ADA compliant.	\$100	John Thalacker	?	A Refuge staff champion to work with John is needed. Larry will follow up.
Science – Inventories and Surveys of Refuge Biota – conducted in collaboration with scientists ¹	With Refuge staff, marine lab, USGS, and UF staff identify needs; develop storage & retrieval system for inventory data. Libby reported that Judy & Dan Dourson, Directors of Belize Foundation for Research & Environmental Education, based in Gainesville, have expressed interest in participating in the Science Initiative.	\$50	Russ Hall Maria Sgambati	Vic	
Shell Mound Visitor Enhancements – improve access/interpretation at archaeological site?	Develop information for kiosk.	\$750	Ron Black? Ken Sassaman?	1. Larry Woodward 2. Andrew Gude	
Trail Guides Initiative - highlight refuge recreational activities in Levy and Dixie	Conceive, research, design content and flyers Bill reported that the Barnett Creek trail guide is in final stages before printing, thanks to the good work of Donna Thalacker, Ann Kamzelski and the Communications Committee. John and Donna reported that a new trail is in progress, to be called the Turkey Foot Trail, which is near Pond 5. Larry reported that Refuge staff have discovered an old tram road running between Refuge HQ and Fowler’s Bluff that ultimately will be developed into a trail.	\$200	Donna Thalacker	1. Pam Darty 2. Andrew Gude	
Butterfly Garden at Refuge HQ	Enhance, enlarge and maintain the butterfly garden at Refuge headquarters.	\$200 \$500	Donna Thalacker	Larry Woodward	
Advocacy & Networking (Outreach)	Supporting causes, legislation, etc. and build mutually supportive relationships with other groups, agencies, etc. that forward the goals and mission of the Friends. Based on Jay’s follow up, the Friends board agreed	\$500	Jay Bushnell	?	

		<u>to participate in the November Sturgeon Conference in Live Oak with a booth/table of information items and merchandise.</u>			
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Friends of the Lower Suwannee & Cedar Key NWRs				
2014 Budget				
	Annual	As of 28 Feb	As of 31 Mar	As of 30 Apr
	Budget	Actual	Actual	Actual
Cash Receipts				
Memberships	3,000.00	2,730.00	2,780.00	2,820.00
Donations	2,500.00	2,488.00	2,758.00	2,797.00
Sales	1,500.00	938.00	1,058.00	1,653.00
Total cash receipts	7,000.00	6,156.00	6,596.00	7,270.00
Cash Disbursements				
support lower suwannee & cedar key nwrs				
Annual meeting (food, supplies, honorarium)	675.00	545.38	545.38	545.38
Communications	1,200.00	366.34	516.34	540.84
Great Suwannee River Cleanup	150.00	26.19	26.19	26.19
Butterfly garden	200.00		74.00	74.00
Festival fees	100.00			
Other (River Walk Signs)	500.00			
Friends of the Cedar Key Library	100.00			
Outreach	500.00			
Kiosk Relocation	500.00			
Refuge Restoration Projects	50.00			
2014 Initiatives				
Art	250.00			
Dixie County Enhancement	250.00			25.68
Education	100.00			
Paddling Project	1,500.00			
Sub-total	6,075.00	937.91	1,161.91	1,212.09

support refuge-initiated activities					
Interagency Cooperators Meeting		500.00			
Refuge summer program (2013)		250.00			
Luncheon for volunteers		150.00			
2014 Initiatives					
Dixie County Refuge expansion		200.00			
Gateway Signage		1,000.00			
Inventories/survey Refuge Biodata		50.00			
Shell Mound Enhancements		750.00			
River Trail Accessibility		100.00			
Refuge Trail Guides		200.00		32.10	32.10
Vista Property Conservation Planning		1,000.00			
sub-total		4,200.00		32.10	32.10
support national wildlife system					
NWR Association Membership		150.00			
sub-total		150.00			
administrative & fundraising support					
Purchase of inventory		2,000.00	2,641.25	2,641.25	2,641.25
PO Box, postage, misc				114.00	133.60
Florida Department of Revenue		100.00	48.61	113.90	113.90
Florida Department of State		100.00	61.25	61.25	61.25
sub-total		2,200.00	2,751.11	2,930.40	2,950.00
Total cash disbursements		12,625.00	3,689.02	4,124.41	4,194.19

Friends of the LS and CK Natl Wildlife Refuges									
Transactions 2014									
Date	ck no	payee	x	Membership	Donations	Sales	Ck Amt	MO Total	Balance
12/31/13									\$19,007.70
1/4/14	202	Marci Wilcox (envelopes/labels member mailing)	x				31.40		
1/4/14	203	Florida Department of Revenue (sales tax)	x				48.61		
1/5/14	dep	Panel sales from hardware store (dep in dec)	x			45.00			
1/10/14	204	Margarete Hall (197.7 commun; 26.19 suwan clnup)	x				223.89		
1/10/14	205	Gerald Salamon (FL Dept of State, Div of Corp)	x				61.25		
1/14/14	dep	Three deps (10+450+210)	x	620.00	50.00				
1/22/14	207	Jabebo LLC (inventory)	x				216.00		
1/28/14	dep	memberships	x	410.00					
1/28/14	dep	memberships	x	460.00	15.00				
1/28/14	dep	memberships	x	130.00					
		Jan totals		1,620.00	65.00	45.00	581.15	1,148.85	20,156.55
2/7/14	dep	memberships donations	x	380.00	20.00				
2/15/14	208	Margarete Hall (communications)	x				1.24		
2/15/14	211	Jay Bushnell (communications)	x				86.00		
2/19/14	212	Stacy Aasved (Graphic design .. Communication)	x				50.00		
2/19/14	213	Marci Wilcox (material for annual meeting)	x				39.92		
2/19/14	214	Jay Bushnell (multiple inventory purchases)	x				2,641.25		
2/22/14	dep	Annual meeting membership	x	730.00	600.00				
2/22/14	215	Jack Davis (speaker for meeting)	x				100.00		
2/22/14	216	Ken McCain (food for meeting (Sam's))	x				405.46		
2/27/14	dep	Annual meeting sales donations	x		1,803.00	938.00			
		Feb total		1,110.00	2,423.00	938.00	3,323.87	1,147.13	21,303.68
3/5/14	217	The Print Shop (communications - brochures)					150.00		
3/5/14	218	USPS (Box rental 1 year - 31 Mar 2015)					60.00		
3/6/14	dep	sales				75.00			
3/6/2014	dep	auction			270.00				
3/18/2014	dep	memberships		50.00					
3/20/2014	dep	sales				45.00			
3/20/2014	219	Plants for butterfly garden					74		
3/20/2014	220	Trail guides					32.10		
3/27/2014	222	CK PO Box					54.00		
3/29/2014	223	Florida Department of Revenue (sales tax)					65.29		

		March total			50.00	270.00	120.00	435.39	-4.61	21,299.07
4/3/2014	224	USPS Stamps						19.60		
4/5/2014	225	Jay Bushnell (Print Shop annual mtg)						55.50		
4/10/2014	dep	membership			20.00					
4/8/14	226	Cash for cash box (OFCA)						100.00		
4/15/2014	dep	OFCA sales					535.00			
4/16/2014	dep	donations (Sheila Templin \$25)				39.00				
4/17/2014	dep	membership			20.00					
4/17/2014	227	Debbie Meeks (Dixie Mainline sign proof)						25.68		
4/18/2014	228	Jay Bushnell (communications) Ibis postage						24.50		
4/20/2014	dep	Trail guides					60.00			
		April total			40.00	39.00	595.00	225.28	448.72	21756.08