

**Citizens Focus Committee
Lake Ouachita**

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

DATE: 10 February 2003

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Lake Ouachita Citizen Focus Committee (CFC) Meeting.

CALL TO ORDER: 1900 hours, Ouachita Project Management Office, by Arnold Habig, Chairperson.

Attendees:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

David Wilkie, Park Ranger, Lake Ouachita Field Office
Robbie Hancock, Park Ranger, Lake Ouachita Field Office

Members Present:

Al Behm
David Doty
Dan Mobley
Rick Farmer
Jerry Williams
Al Gathright
Arnold Habig
Howard Wright
Michael Misch
Jerry Shields
Steve Laney
Patty Roddenberry
Bill Barnes

Members Absent:

Sue Richardson
Delia McBride

Administrative Matters:

Arnold Habig called the meeting to order at 1900. Arnold Habig introduced Steve Laney, a new member from Camden, Arkansas.

Minutes Review:

The January 13, 2003 minutes were reviewed and approved as submitted.

Marine Sanitation

Arnold Habig said the CFC sent comments on the proposed legislation to Brenda Meeks who in turn forwarded them to the Little Rock District Corps of Engineers for consideration by the Marine Sanitation Advisory Committee. Arnold Habig said the Governor is changing agencies

around and as a result, nobody is sure who will be in charge of marine sanitation when the reorganization is complete. Arnold Habig proposed to Marynell Branch of Governor Huckabee's office that the Committee go ahead and pursue passage of the bill, putting the Arkansas Department of Health in charge of enforcement and the legislature can worry about who will be in charge of marine sanitation later, after reorganization. Bill Barnes said he had spoken to a state legislator who would introduce the bill, which needed to be by March 3. Arnold Habig said as soon as the bill was introduced, he would contact all CFC members to encourage them to write their legislators.

Arnold Habig asked Bill Barnes to contact Greers Ferry Marina personnel to check on their support for the bill and what they were doing towards its passage. Bill Barnes agreed. Bill Barnes and Al Behm stated that in some states, officials' authority to board and inspect houseboats was being challenged.

Public Relations:

Arnold Habig discussed giving flyers or letters to recreational users of Lake Ouachita, informing them to contact legislators to get more funding for lakes and recreation. Rick Dwyer is checking to see about the legality of distributing such information. Bill Barnes said the CFC should contact Senator Blanche Lincoln, or her aid in Little Rock, Cynthia Edwards, to inquire about status of the National Recreation Lakes Act. Al Behm said the CFC should obtain from Senator Lincoln what she needs to further her bill.

David Doty stated he wanted to start a political action committee (PAC) in the CFC. He said people in the committee could make a \$50 or \$100 donation to the PAC after they complete their taxes and not give the money to the Government. David Doty said this might get the CFC's foot in the door to some politicians. Al Behm said he did not think the Corps would allow that. David Doty said the money could be used for postage and other support.

Arnold Habig asked Jerry Shields if he had had a chance to contact some Chambers of Commerce; Jerry informed him he had not as he had been sick for some time. Al Gathright said the Corps did not have a public relations plan, did not have a plan to inform the public, and there was no public trust in the Corps.

Aquatic Vegetation:

Dan Mobley asked how much it cost to put out herbicide. Bill Barnes said it cost Mountain Harbor about \$4,000.00 to treat five acres around the boat ramp last year. Dan Mobley asked if the Corps had a licensed applicator. Bill Barnes said yes, Pam Rowland. Dan Mobley said the commercial concessions should pay for putting out herbicides in their areas around the marinas. Arnold Habig wanted to know if the Corps had any money to apply herbicides this year. Bill Barnes said the Corps found some money in 2002 to apply herbicides around Brady Mountain, Crystal Springs and Shangri-la. He said Mountain Harbor, North Shores and the State Park paid their own way to put some around their areas. This was not fair, and that concessions should receive money from kickback funds at the end of the year. Bill Barnes said for FY03, there is a \$5.7 million shortfall for the Arkansas lakes, and he was going to Washington to try to get more funding.

Al Behm questioned the use of the Pakistani Fly, and asked if the Corps of Engineers was raising the fly for release. Al Behm also said it appeared the Corps was going to try and use the fly without public input. Bill Barnes told the committee that was not the case and that Waterways Experiment Stations (WES) is working on fly raising and research. Al Behm said he spoke to the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission about the fly and he said if the Corps is growing the fly, they should educate the public about its use. Patty Roddenberry stated she understood that only herbicides were going to be used, and not the fly.

David Doty said that Texas A&M had researched use of the grass carp. Al Behm said the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission do not support carp introduction. They replace other species and only work 3 or 4 years. David Doty said we should know the full story about grass carp and what happened at Lake Conroe in Texas. Al Behm wanted to know what the Corps is doing; David Doty stated that the 10-page implementation plan given to the group in November is what they are doing. Al Behm said the group needs more information from the Corps without always asking. Arnold Habig suggested to Behm he write a letter asking for the plan of action; Behm responded that it would take too long to get results.

OLD BUSINESS

Pending List Review:

Arnold Habig proceeded to the new pending list and asked if Robbie Hancock could answer any of the items on the list. Robbie Hancock stated he did not have current information to provide to the group, as he was a last minute substitute due to Rick Stokes' and Rick Dwyer's required attendance at a Federal Employee Compensation Act meeting in Vicksburg.

David Doty read part of the letter he sent to Rick Stokes' home in response to Mr. Stokes letter regarding response guidance.

A digital picture was taken of the group for use on the web page.

Annual Passes:

Rick Farmer suggested an annual pass that either peels off or goes on a boat trailer. He said he had received a warning for improper display, and the system needs to be changed. Robbie Hancock explained that the sticker format was a national policy.

Concession Acreage:

Jerry Williams said the information provided was still not enough. He wants the historical acreage from the Master Plan.

Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at 2020 hours.