

**Citizens Focus Committee
Lake Ouachita**

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD

DATE: 12 May 2003

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

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

Attendees:

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

Rick Dwyer, Supervisory Park Ranger, Lake Ouachita Field Office
Pamela Rowland, Park Ranger, Lake Ouachita Field Office

Members Present:

Al Behm
David Doty
Rick Farmer
Sue Richardson
Arnold Habig
Howard Wright
Steve Laney
Patty Roddenberry
Michael Misch
Jerry Shields

Members Absent:

Patty Roddenberry
Bill Barnes
Delia McBride
Jerry Williams
Al Gathright

Administrative Matters:

Arnold Habig called the meeting to order at 1900.

Minutes Review:

The April 14, 2003 minutes were reviewed and approved as submitted with the exception of a word change. In reference to the section titled 'By-Laws' the word possibly shall be deleted.

Marine Sanitation

Act 1774 in reference to HB2525 Marine Sanitation and Act 1695 in reference to HB2111 appropriations for the Marine Sanitation Bill were both passed. However, appropriations and funding problems are still being resolved. David Doty has stated that he will follow up on the Bill's budget matters and report them to the committee.

Aquatic Vegetation:

Rick Stokes updated the committee on recent information pertaining to hypospectral imaging that has been requested by the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission. Rick Stokes enlightened the committee on how the 3D imagery works with color-coding areas by type of vegetation. Stokes has been in contact with Bill Bernard of 3DI and John Lane with the Corps Topo Lab in Washington D.C. They have been discussing the cost comparison of having the images taken by plane or by satellite. Bobby Pharr with Entergy is interested in this venture and may cost share providing that Lake Catherine and Hamilton are flown for imagery as well.

Stokes further reiterated that the pond constructed at Degray Lake to host the hydrilla flies is still doing very well. Mr. Grodowitz of ERDC is skeptical of our efforts but is planning visit the pond to ensure that it will support the fly colony. Grodowitz does have permission to import the flies but does not yet have approval to import the hydrilla infested with flies to put in the Degray pond.

Rick Stokes informed the committee on another biological control that would be an effective tool on the control of Eurasian water milfoil. The milfoil beetle will control milfoil in the same manner that the hydrilla fly can control hydrilla.

Rick Stokes discussed the addition of 500 more acres to the 100 acres currently listed in the Environmental Assessment for Aquatic Weed Control on Degray Lake and Lake Ouachita.

Arnie Habig wanted to know the actual cost of the imagery. Stokes informed the committee that The Corps is still working to gain knowledge of the cost associated with the imagery but will inform the committee when he knows the cost. Stokes commented that currently there is still no money available for the imagery but may become available toward the end of the fiscal year.

Arnie inquired as to whether or not there will be a strategic plan to control the vegetation once the imagery is completed. Stokes answered by informing the committee that Grodowitz and Lane currently have control programs written to control vegetation but the programs will have to be revised to be individual to Lake Ouachita. Arnie later inquired about who would make the decision to purchase imagery by plane or satellite. Stokes said that the Corps would make the determination based on quality and cost of both methods. Stokes also indicated that imagery of the whole lake would serve as a baseline that could be revisited in later years to determine success.

Arnie Habig later inquired about what Lake Ouachita planned to do about the aquatic weeds this year and what factors would determine which areas would be treated. Stokes replied by informing the committee that the Currently had enough herbicide to treat only about 10 acres

and that the degree of infestation at boat ramps and swim beaches would be considered first. Rick Farmer expressed concerns about whether or not the carp were being completely ruled out as a control measure. Stokes assured him that the carp were still being considered.

Denby Point Visitor Center:

Jerry Shields has been interested in placing a visitor center at the Denby bridge. The State Highway Department is planning to build a new bridge in the area. Rick Stokes and other interested parties are discussing the possibility of having the Game and Fish Commission place a new boat launching ramp at the existing bridge area. Further plans would include a visitor center with several stakeholders such as Game and Fish, Audubon Society, Department of Parks and Tourism, Corps of Engineers, Chamber of Commerce and possibly the Forest Service. The Corps could contribute by leasing land and turning the very old hwy 270 bridge into a fishing pier and possibly add trails in the area. Shields indicated that there are several grants available through the Dept. of Transportation that might help fund the project. Stokes drew a map of the plans (a very rough draft sketch) for all to see. Many committee members including Shields, Habig, and Rick Stokes were enthusiastic about the prospect of a visitor center in that area. Shields informed the committee that Prissy Hickson, the AR State Highway Commissioner would be visiting Tuesday and that he planned on asking her how to get Hwy 270 designated as a scenic highway. Stokes asked the committee what might be needed in order to get this project underway. Habig and Behm answered by saying the Corps would first need a conceptual plan, then they'd need sketches and a basic layout of the area, and lastly, the Corps would need to devise a list of stakeholders that might be interested in participating in this joint venture.

NEW BUSINESS

In the April meeting Jerry Shields expressed his concerns that the name of the committee is being confused with another group with a similar name in Montgomery County that has been somewhat anti-government in the past. David Doty suggested the group drop Focus from the name. David Doty suggested a vote on this matter at the next month's meeting, to possibly change the name to the Lake Ouachita Citizen Committee. Discussion went on as to whether or not the name should be changed and how the Corps devised the name for the committee in the first place. Stokes informed the group that Vicksburg lawyers had decided on the committee's name based on the committee intended purpose and further indicated that the committee should not serve as an advisory committee and should not be named in a manner so as to indicated that it was an advisory committee. The committee then decided that the name would not be changed but that all official correspondence of the committee would name the entire committee name, which is Lake Ouachita Citizens Focus Committee.

By-laws:

There was much discussion over the by-laws as it applies to members that are not contributing. Some members feel they are contributing more to the committee than others and wish to remove the committee of 'dead weight'. This subject prompted discussion about the length of

term a member would serve. The motion was made that members have a two-year appointment and can be re-appointed for another term if 7 other member favor re-appointing that member. A vote was taken but did not pass.

David Doty was not willing to make a motion on 105, which pertains to members missing meetings. Habig moved to amend the 105 amendment by changing the wording to 'the absence of 3 consecutive meetings or 5 meetings in a year'. A vote was taken and it was determined that 105 would remain as is.

Another motion was made by Doty concerning the 205 amendments, which places restrictions on a chairman's tenure. The motion was seconded by Michael Misch. A vote was taken and passed 9-1.

Lastly, another motion was made to correct a typo in 305 of the by-laws. Apparently Park Manager was mis-capitalized and should be corrected.

New Projects:

Last month there was some discussion about the perception of the Corps based on local public opinion. Shields felt that the Corps was not doing an adequate job of keeping the public informed about issues at Lake Ouachita. To follow up on this comment Arnie informed the committee that the web page was not up-dated.

Rick Farmer is interested in having the Annual Pass sticker rules changed. He'd like for the stickers to be placed on the trailer of the vessel rather than on the vehicle pulling the trailer. There will be more discussion on this later.

Adjournment:

Meeting was adjourned at 2032 hours. David Doty provided a sheet cake, in honor of Bill Barnes and Arnold Habig who had worked so diligently and successfully for HB2525, which will enhance the waters of Arkansas for years to come.