Friends of Lake Ouachita

1424 Blakely Dam Road

Royal, AR 71968

Monday April 5, 2021 Meeting

Participants:

Al Gathright

John Simpson

Tom Butler

Dan Watson

Allan Atkins

Robert Cavanaugh

Jerry Shields

Shane Scott

Ron Mayfield

Bill Barnes

Jo West Tayler

Stacy Sigman, Mike Wade, Shawn McBay – USACE

Amanda Waldrod – USFS Womble Ranger

History of Lake Ouachita Construction Presentation

Mike opened the meeting with introducing himself. During his presentation he covered Native Americans that were in the Ouachita area, the first settlers to come to the area, pre-dam preparation, actual dam construction, dam operation, and safeguards in place in the event of a break. Mike answered multiple questions about inspection frequency of the dam, reason for pre-dam permit termination, and history of issues or damage to the dam.

Jerry thanked Mike for his presentation and began the agenda. Jerry introduced Tom Butler.

Grab-A-Bag Update

Tom advised that FOLO recently bought 5,000 bags for the program which should get them through most of the busy season this year. He stated that FOLO is currently looking for doners for this program so funds currently used can be used in other projects. Tom also stated that they were looking at trying a cheaper bag for the program that is one-third the thickness of the current bags. A trial run will be done this year with the new bag.

Bill Barnes asked Tom if there were any extra Grab-A-Bag dispensers available for the Mountain Harbor Marina area. Jerry replied with there should be a few extra and he would check.

Jo advised FOLO members that if they are on the lake picking up trash or debris to log those hours down and send them to her for reporting purposes.

Texas Conservation Trail Crew

Ron stated that the trail crew was currently camped in Charlton and would be in the area until the 16th of April. Ron advised he would be meeting with the crew the following day. The crew will be working in the Crystal Springs section of the LOVIT and upon completion of that area would move to the Womble Trail. Ron stated The Texas trail crew consists of 6 to 10 members and has young adults from across the country. He also said there is talk of starting a similar trail crew based here in Arkansas.

Amanda advised Ron of a crew/organization that the Forest Service uses in some of their projects.

LOViT, OT and Womble Maintenance

The Walton Family Foundation has funded a professional IMBA trail maintenance crew for the past 4-5 years. The crew helped maintain the three IMBA Epic Trails in our area – LOViT, OT and Womble.  In December 2020, the WFF terminated their affiliation with the IMBA crew. At that time, individuals with  FoOt and the LOViT Traildogs formed a loose coalition to help restore WFF trail maintenance funding.

Trail maintenance grant notification was recently received from the WFF -   FoOt - $10,000 annually and LOViT - $5,000 annually. The grants will be used to help maintain the three IMBA Epic Trails.

Jerry suggested looking into grants from health organizations to assist in paving around the workout equipment at the Denby Bay ADA Trail.

USACE Operational Review

Stacy stated the Corps is looking into the future to remove the Little Fir water treatment facility and put all the bathhouses on their own septic tank system. Planning is still in early stages.

Jerry thanked everyone for attending this month’s meeting and closed the meeting.