

## Lake Ouachita Citizen Focus Committee



**1201 Blakely Dam Road  
Royal, AR 71964**

**MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD:** Lake Ouachita Citizen Focus Committee Minutes

**DATE:** September 12, 2012

**CALL TO ORDER:** 1830 hours by Arnie Habig

**U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:**

Rick Dwyer, Resource Manager, Lake Ouachita Field Office

Amy Shultz, Park Ranger, Lake Ouachita

**Members Present:**

Bill Barnes	Robert Cavanaugh	David Doty	Buck Rogers	Rick Stokes
Phillip Carr	George Dooley	Arnold Habig	Walt Sitter	Jerry Williams

**Minutes in Review:** The minutes for July and August were approved as written.

**FOLO Update:** Dave D. related that the campsite reservations ended on September 8<sup>th</sup> and the fee collector contracts for Crystal Springs will end on September 15<sup>th</sup>. Volunteer Campground Hosts will be start collecting campsite fees on September 22<sup>nd</sup>. Dave D. further related he would be receiving a report from NRRS and FOLO would receive at least one more payment from NRRS in September for the campsites fees collected. Dave D. inquired about the status of the campground reservation ratio for Fiscal Year 2013. Rick D. stated Brenda M. was checking on the status and is hoping to have an answer by the end of the week. Dave D. also asked about the status of the lease agreement for the Tompkins Bend Recreation Area. Rick D. related that the Real Estate Division in Vicksburg is currently working on the lease agreement and incorporating the Cooperative Agreement as an addendum to the lease agreement.

Dave D. related that on August 16<sup>th</sup>, Rick D., Bill J., Jason M., Amy S., Al G., Rick S. and Dave D. spent 3 hours in Crystal Springs identifying a tentative priority list of projected improvement projects for the recreation area. Since then, the Corps has provided a project list and Rick S. has provided a project list of 13 items with cost estimates. Rick S. and Rick D. met last Thursday and combined a few items on the two lists. This final list was distributed to the LOCFC members. Rick D. stated that several items have been purchased with fiscal year end funds. The Corps has purchased gravel, circular metal tables, expanded metal group use tables, large bbq grills, wooden benches for LOViT trail, benches for playgrounds, and more electrical wiring.

Arnie H. asked what items on the list had been changed. Rick D. stated they combined item #5 with item #1. Rick D. stated they would delay stripping out the old water treatment plant since it is being considered to be used as a possible camp store in the future. Dave D. inquired about the campground host site construction near old wastewater treatment plant. Rick D. stated it did not appear on the list, but it would be easy to complete this project. Arnie H. asked about constructing group sites across from the beach. Rick D. stated that the construction of campsites across from the beach were on the list of items to be considered, but probably would not be completed this year. Arnie H. inquired if the 5 tent sites in area C will be turned into group sites this year. Rick D. stated yes, that was a priority item on the list. Dave D. moved that the priority list be recommended to FOLO board for approval. Robert C. seconded motion and the motion was unanimously approved. Rick S. stated based on his estimated costs, \$59,000 would be the maximum amount FOLO could expect to spend. The Corps will provide much of the labor and FOLO will purchase most of the supplies. Rick S. related the method he uses to figure cost estimates is to estimate the total cost of a project, and then add 15% more for contingency. He shared that FOLO does not have to get projects approved through contracting and engineering, so it is much easier and cheaper for FOLO to purchase items than for the Corps. Rick D. shared that the Corps had been researching playground equipment and there is a company that has a very good sale running. Rick D. inquired if FOLO would trust the Corps to pick out the equipment if it could be purchased for less than \$20,000. Dave D. offered for FOLO to write the check to the company. Dave D. stated they would be closing A loop on October 1<sup>st</sup> to allow the Corps to begin work in that area, making improvements and performing maintenance. Arnie H. stated when Rick S. sent out a 5 year plan that it requires a committee to make recommendations. Arnie H. expressed his concern that the next time FOLO is considering to expand its operations, there needs to be more than five people on the board of directors to make the decision. Rick S. stated he believes having multiple eyes looking at decisions is a very good idea.

### **Sub-Committee Reports:**

**Lake Ouachita Vista Trail:** Robert C. related the Trail Dogs received the Conservation Organization of the Year award from the Arkansas Wildlife Federation presented by Governor Beebe during a ceremony held in Bryant, Arkansas. Robert C. continued that there were over 300 people who attended the ceremony. In order to recognize the Trail Dog volunteers, Rick D. stated an article would be submitted to the Vicksburg District's Public Affairs Office for publication in the District's various publications.

Arnie H. provided information provided by Jerry S. concerning the construction being proposed for the LOViT trail. The contractor, chosen to complete the trail section to Brady Mountain Road, has been delayed on a project in Alabama, so the proposed start date has been pushed to October or November. The section of trail to Brady Mountain Road is still scheduled to be completed by December 1. Arnie H. also passed along the email received from Al G. concerning the Arkansas Department of Highway and Transportation (ADHT) grant for completion of the LOViT trail to Blakely Mountain Dam. In his email, Al G. stated he had received a phone call from Bill Bastress, Grant Administrator, ADHT, who related the \$90,000 grant proposal for the final leg of the trail had been scored, along with other grant proposals, and although he could not give an official grade, Bastress stated the proposal looked good. Bastress went on to say the grant

application had been well written and complete. Official notifications on those grants being awarded probably will not be given until November. Robert C. related that other than some trees down, the trail is in good shape, Robert C. continued in saying that the section from Crystal over Big Bear Mountain is not being used very much by hikers/bikers because they would be required to backtrack to Crystal since the trail has not been completed to Brady Mountain Road.

Robert C. inquired about the additional gravel pave needed to complete the surface area around the exercise stations at the ADA trail. Rick D. stated the Corps had left 6 rolls of gravel pave in the storage yard at Tompkins Bend. Rick D. related that the area had been visited by some of the Vicksburg District personnel during their tour of Lake Ouachita, Mr. James Ross, Chief, Operations Division; Mr. David Jenkins, Assistant Chief, Operations Division and Mr. Johnny Kiser, Chief, Project Resources Management toured the ADA trail area and were very impressed with the work that had been accomplished in the area. Rick D. also related the Corps had purchased a few small pavilions that could be used to cover the exercise equipment and trail markers, protecting them from exposure to the elements.

Robert C. inquired about the proposal to construct a small parking area along the Crystal Springs road, where the trail crosses, to allow users to park safely out of the roadway. Rick D. stated the Corps was looking at this area. Dave D. inquired about getting the final list of structures from Bill J. to be insured at Tompkins Bend.

**Aquatic Vegetation:** Arnie H. related Tom B. has spent \$5,287.42 on the exclusion cage material to construct 400 cages and continued that there may be another \$100.00 needed to complete the cage project. Tom B. requested that FOLO wait until the entire project has been completed and then Johnny C. will provide all the receipts for the material, before FOLO reimburses him to cover the materials purchased. Rick D. related that 360 cages have been completed and plans are to place the cages in the lake sometime in October. Arnie H. related he has a copy of the Arkansas Aquatic Nuisance Species Management Plan, which is a very large document, consisting of 266 pages and he will share with anyone who may be interested in reading it.

**Comments:** Amy S. distributed partnership notes to the LOCFC members from her recent participation in the Association of Partners for Public Lands (APPL) conference held in Golden, Colorado. In the training and meetings she attended, it appeared the current LOCFC/FOLO/Corps partnership program is doing extremely well compared to other partnering groups around the country. The key items noted were open communication, trust, and working towards a common goal are the keys that establish a great partnership. Amy S. further related that she had noted from the meetings, although partners do not often always agree on everything, it was important to have a relationship where differences could be discussed and all parties being able to come to a healthy compromise. Amy S. also expressed the need for diverse representation on the LOCFC, such as recruiting women, young adults and people of different races/backgrounds/cultures to serve as members on the committee.

Arnie H. related the Ouachita River Valley Association (ORVA) meeting was postponed until October 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> due to Hurricane Isaac. Since the conference dates were changed, he will be able to attend the conference in Monroe, Louisiana, representing the LOCFC. Arnie H. inquired if there would be anyone from the District Office in Vicksburg that would be attending the conference and possibly asking about the Cooperative Agreement (CA) with FOLO? Rick D. stated he would ask and let Arnie know who may be attending the conference. Rick D. related that the salvage contractor, hired by Brady Mountain Resort, had safely removed the 15 ton crane from the lake, which had sunk in May, and there had been no issues with the removal.

**Financial Report:** Rick S. stated FOLO would be utilizing 95 % of the funds collected to make improvements in the Crystal Springs area. Rick S. went on to say that it would be a benefit for the Corps to develop a news release detailing the FOLO plans for reinvestment of the collected funds. Bill B. cautioned that using the 95% figure in the news release may send a wrong message, but simply indicating FOLO's plans to reinvest collected funds in making improvements to the recreation area instead. Dave D. stated if more than 80% of funds collected can be put back into improvements in the Crystal area, they are doing well. Dave D. further related that it is estimated that FOLO will have approximately \$120,000 at the end of the calendar year from the fees collected in Crystal Springs. Rick S. continued that if half of the first page on the priority list can be accomplished, the public will notice a difference in the recreation area and appreciate the partnership that much more. Arnie H. inquired if the insurance for Tompkins Bend would be the same, \$3,500.00/annually, as it was for the Crystal Springs area. Dave D. stated it will probably cost about \$2,500.00 additional expense. Dave D. continued in related that representatives from the Vicksburg District Real Estate Division had completed their re-inspection of the Crystal Springs area and all was found to be in order.

**FOLO Financial Report as of August 21, 2012:**

<b>Assets:</b>	
Cash-Trail Account:	\$10,437.00
Cash-Miscellaneous:	\$332.00
Cash-Crystal Springs Rec. Area	\$106,880.00
<b>Total Assets:</b>	<b>\$ 117,649.00</b>

**Adjournment:** Meeting was adjourned at 7:45 P.M.