

Lake Ouachita Citizen Focus Committee



**1424 Blakely Dam Road
Royal, Arkansas 71964**

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD: Lake Ouachita Citizens Focus Committee Minutes

DATE: June 5, 2017

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m. by Dan Watson, Chairman

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

Stacy Sigman, Resource Manager, Lake Ouachita Field Office
Derick Walker, Supervisory Ranger, Lake Ouachita Field Office
Mike Wade, Natural Resource Specialist, Lake Ouachita Field Office

Members Present:

Tom Butler	Al Gathright	Dan Watson
George Dooley	Jerry Shields	Howard Wright
Bruce Engstrom	Rick Stokes	Robert Cavanaugh
Jo West Taylor	Janis Vaughn	Arnie Habig

Announcements: Arnie H. commended USACE on the newly renovated campsites at Brady Mountain.

Review of Minutes: The minutes from the May 1st meeting were approved as written. –Jerry S. moved to approve minutes, Al G. seconded.

Chair and Vice Chair Nominations: Al G. nominated Jerry S. as Chair. Jerry S. nominated Al G. as Vice-Chair. Arnie H. nominated Robert C. as Vice Chair. Tom B. nominated Howard W. as Vice Chair.

Corps of Engineers Report-USACE

- Stacy S. shared the Buckville Recreation Area roadwork improving drainage and bringing in additional road material to build up interior roadways.
- Installation of the Crystal Springs Recreation Area 3 high water gate is almost complete. This gate will allow USACE to keep Area 3 campsites open for an additional 3 foot of lake level rise.

- Survey work from 4 miles east of Lake Ouachita State Park to Crystal Springs is being prepared through an IDIQ contract which will repaint boundary lines and reset missing monuments denoting boundaries between federal and private property.
- A minor timber sale will be conducted at the Tompkins Bend Recreation Area boat ramp this fall to expand the current parking by approximately 15-20 spaces.
- Brady Mountain Recreation Area will be getting the new wastewater treatment plant installed this fall, and Area 4 campsite rehab will be done since all heavy equipment is already in the area.
- Rick S. brought up a possibility for gaining additional budget support for Vicksburg District lakes. Rick recommended that LOCFC start a campaign to see what our area representatives (Westerman, Cotton, ...) would support to get an additional \$1M budgeted for lakes Ouachita, Greeson, and DeGray, noting that Ouachita is one of the largest recreational lakes in Arkansas, and that it provides a huge overall benefit to Arkansas for every dollar spent. Rick notes that Arkansas lakes are the ones that always get the last bit of money.
 - Bruce E. noted that Mike Huckabee was governor when the \$0.01 sales tax was approved, and that his daughter, Sarah Huckabee, might be approached to help with this.
 - Rick S. moved, and Bruce E. seconded, a motion that LOCFC pursue additional funding for Lake Ouachita.
 - Arnie H. said he would draft a letter from LOCFC to our representatives regarding needing this money for the area.
 - Rick S. added that we might also petition the Ouachita River Valley Authority for increased support.
 - Bruce E. and Jo T. suggested that we should ask for more than we might expect, and that the request should note a number of projects on which the money might be spent.
- Derick W. explained the comment cards process and provided blanks surveys to the group. The random generated areas were compiled for the months of June-August.
 - Dan asked the LOCFC membership that they review the time slots for handing out and gathering comment cards and that they send him times and locations that they can cover. Dan will email the spreadsheet with the selected times and locations to the LOCFC membership.
- Stacy S. talked about previous load test results on the Joplin Bridge. [I thought that we sort of punted on this discussion pending more information from Jerry Williams, and that Stacy was going to try to follow up with Jerry.]
- Arnie H. asked about what donations were needed for Wounded Warrior Hunts. USACE replied by saying anything will be accepted and we normally have around 3-5 hunters.
- Dan W. noted EKIP was a great success and Stacy S. shared Amy was doing a Ranger Update article on the event.
- Bruce E. discussed concerns over cleanup of Ebone Point. USACE noted volunteers normally clean this areas for us and USACE sent out cleanup crews twice last year to cut up downed trees. Bruce E. will get with Derick W. to go out and discuss what his Derick's crew can and cannot underbrush if he finds a volunteer to come out and do work.
- Jerry S. asked that the USACE come up with the top 5 items that they want for Lake Ouachita. "Including, but not limited to ..."
 - Stacy said he would provide LOCFC with a "5-year breakdown" ...
- Janet V. wanted to discuss rules concerning campers knocking on doors during holidays to see when campers were leaving. Stacy S. noted there wasn't a rule on this issue. Janet V. asked if campers could remove their registration tag from their campsite post and Derick W. said "no".

- Janet V. also asked USACE to consider putting lights on buoys and Stacy S. said “no”; this would be too much maintenance and costly for USACE.
 - Stacy noted that there are as many as 250 buoys on the lake, and at ~\$150/light, the cost is prohibitive. It’s also noted that, once lights are added, there is a requirement that they be maintained, and lights are expected to fail every 2 or so years.
 - Derick noted that about 25 to 30 buoys have been installed recently.

Adopt A Shoreline:

- Bruce E. volunteered to go out to pick up bags of debris gathered by volunteers in the event of a formal program. In the past, volunteers have brought their bags to common gathering points.
- It was noted that, in the past, groups of volunteers could earn awards for gathering the most debris.
- At this time, there is no formal program for cleaning Ouachita shorelines.

What is the Corps Foundation?

- Bruce E. asked about this foundation, a 501(c)(3) program that helps support the USACE, similar to the LOCFC/FOLO but on a larger scale.
- Believe that local USACE can apply for grants for programs through this foundation.

Trash Bag Dispensers for shoreline/island visitors

- Tom B. brought a prototype of the sign and trash bag dispensers that could be placed at boat ramps and marinas. He will bring to Derick W. to install at various boat ramps in the next couple weeks. He has (18) built.
- USACE can provide storage for bags for the dispensers.
- Stacy said that the USACE would provide an article for the “Ranger Update” periodical.

Way Forward Committee: Dan shared there was no report from way forward committee this month.

LOCFC Project Progress Reports:

- **Donation boxes:** No report
- **Campground Maps:** Arnie H. reported that he has not received a response from the Colonel Deroiser and was surprised he hasn’t.

FOLO Update-FOLO Board:

- **Courtesy Docks:** No change.

Grants:

- Rick S. has worked on a business plan for a standing grants committee and will forward to Dan W. for next meeting to discuss.

LOViT:

- Robert C. said a trail maintenance day was held June 1, which included seven Traildogs. They spread materials supplied from USACE over 100 feet of washed trail sections on the LOViT in the area of Tompkins Bend.
- Robert C. shared success of a “Tires on Trail” event sponsored by the Mount Ida Chamber of Commerce and held at Tompkins Bend Day Use that brought (20) people to bring awareness to the trails in the area.
- Al G. shared that the request for additional signage on the LOViT had been sent into USACE and USFS for approval. Once approved, he will package and send onto Walton Foundation for grant consideration.

Adjournment: Meeting adjourned @ 7:15 P.M.