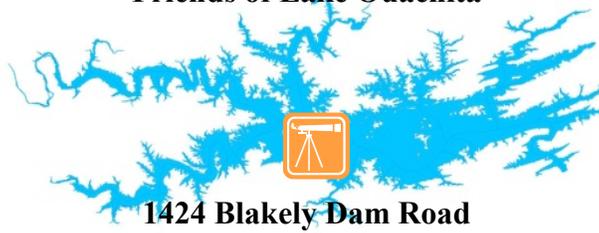


Friends of Lake Ouachita



1424 Blakely Dam Road

Royal, Arkansas 71968

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD: Friends of Lake Ouachita Committee Minutes

DATE: June 3, 2019

CALL TO ORDER: 6:00 p.m. by Jerry Shields

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

Dustin Thomason, Biologist, Lake Ouachita Project Office

Amy Shultz, Natural Resource Specialist, Lake Ouachita Field Office

Members Present:

Alan Atkins	Robert Cavanaugh	Ron Mayfield	Jerry Williams
Bill Barnes	George Dooley	Jerry Shields	
Tom Butler	Bruce Engstrom	John Simpson	
Phillip Carr	Al Gathright	Jo West Taylor	

Review of Minutes: Robert C. moved to approve minutes from the May 6th meeting with change made. Jo W. seconded, minutes approved.

Election of Chair and Vice-Chair Results:

Jerry shared results from the election of officers: He will remain Chair, and Robert C. will be Vice Chair of the committee.

Final Decision on HWY 27 N. Strip Mine: Ron M. shared no decision has been made yet. The close of comments was May 29th.

2019 Lake Cleanup: Jo W. asked to represent the committee and pursue a grant for the cleanup event. Jerry mentioned in the past, banners and free bags were given to volunteer events through Keep Arkansas Beautiful. Amy S. shared National Public Lands Day also sends cleanup supplies if you register your event online-she will send the link to Jo W. A date will be set by the August meeting for the event, and Jerry asked Jo W. to look into having some posters made to advertise for the event.

Hickory Nut Mountain Coalition Plan Status: Jerry S. shared a meeting will be set with Norman Wagoner, Ouachita National Forest Supervisor, this month. Jerry will give an update at the August FOLO meeting on the outcome of the meeting with Mr. Wagoner. Ron M. shared a woman had posted on Facebook about some offensive graffiti on the Hickory Nut Mtn. Vista (a swastika). George D. inquired who owned and maintained the road going to the vista. Jerry stated the Forest Service Jerry shared if the meeting outcome was not positive for the renovations to the roadway and vista, the next steps could possibly be surveys/petitions of community members in favor of the renovations. Jerry further stated the Montgomery County Judge was in contact with the senators and representatives about this project.

LOViT Trail:

ADA Beaver Infestation: Jerry shared there was a beaver infestation on the ADA trail. Phillip C. stated they were also having problems with beavers and otters at Shangri La docks. Jerry further shared there is a problem with ticks around the exercise equipment at the ADA trail and asked if the Corps could treat the area with some roundup. Jerry shared the trail dogs had repainted the restroom at the ADA trail and the Corps had installed a nice walkway to the bottle refill station. Jerry asked if the Corps could cut the grass by the creek so hikers can see the creek.

E-Coli Issues: Jerry mentioned the inquiries/complaints on Facebook about the E-Coli at Lake Ouachita beaches and recreation areas. Ouachita Project Biologist, Dustin Thomason, discussed E. Coli-it is a coliform bacteria –stated it is present in all animal waste. We know the Canada Geese population have a lot to do with E-Coli contamination. Dustin further shared, Derick W. had ordered flare guns and whistles to shoot as a deterrent for geese at the swim beaches. It was suggested to host a special veteran goose hunt at Ouachita. Other means of controlling the geese were discussed. Bruce E. believes hiring a contract for trained dogs to scare geese off beaches would be best. Amy S. shared why the Corps would not be going this route: Cannot enforce leash law if these dogs are allowed off leash to chase geese, also, if any of the dogs were to be perceived as being aggressive toward a visitor, it is a liability the Corps isn't willing to take. There was some discussion as to whether Game and Fish or Fish and Wildlife could contract trained dog handlers at Ouachita. Amy suggested they ask Stacy S. prior to contacting these

agencies. Dustin shared the Corps geese control permits come through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife. Jerry asked about the possibility of using live traps. Dustin stated you might be able to trap during molting season. Dustin further shared that when a test comes back higher than allowable limits for E-Coli at the beaches, there has to be two additional tests come back below the limit threshold to be able to open the beach. The committee suggested putting up “Do Not Feed the Geese Signs”. Amy stated she believed some of those signs were already out, but would ask about posting additional signage. Jerry S. asked Jerry W. if relocating geese would be an issue. Jerry W. stated it would not.

Grab-A-Bag: Tom B. asked if all the new Grab- a -Bag containers had been installed. Amy stated she would ask Derick and Stacy and let him know. Suggestion was made to put Grab a Bags on floating restrooms. Amy will pass along suggestion. Bill B. shared Todd Gadberry services the floating restrooms for the contract company.

USACE Operational Review: Jerry S. shared the Crystal Springs Courtesy Dock had been damaged by a large boat. “Butch” had been out to evaluate the damage and had estimated 3-5K for repairs. Amy shared anything over 3 K, the Corps has to go through a special contract process to purchase. Bill B. made a motion to support FOLO paying the excess amount of repair over the 3K USACE pays at the discretion of FOLO Inc. Motion approved.

Amy passed out the possible grant lists to the committee.

Amy shared the Memorial Day holiday report for Lake Ouachita with the committee-relatively few incidents for number of visitors, and no injury reports.

Jerry asked about the possibility of creating new campsites at Denby Day Use area since the day use at Denby is seldom utilized. Amy will pass along suggestion.

Committee asked about parking regulations...they used to be strictly enforced, and now they are not. Amy stated the Corps does not have enough parking areas to accommodate all the campers and visitors, especially on holiday weekends. As long as they are parked near the campsite (not on shoreline), and not blocking roadways or facilities, the Corps is lenient on parking.

Committee asked if two campers can still camp on one site. Amy stated yes, a lot of times they are warned about electricity possibly going out if overloaded. Jerry stated they need to look into making campsites more useable making sites with RV and Tent pads on one site. Bill asked if FOLO could purchase materials and build sites in Corps campgrounds. Amy stated, if it was approved, they could. Would depend on area and plans. Jerry inquired about campsite location. Amy stated if sites are not near the water, they will not be utilized. Committee would like to pursue grants to build additional campsites. Bill shared the biggest cost with constructing more sites is if you have to purchase another restroom which is 80-100K. Jerry asked the committee to search for more areas to put additional campsites in recreation areas.

Amy shared one of the possibilities for obtaining a grant would be to build a swing set/playground at the Crystal Springs Day Use since the swing set has been torn down due to

damage. Jerry asked the committee members to look over the possible project list and pick something they are interested in to work on getting a grant to accomplish.

Closing Comments: Bill B. stated he had met in Little Rock with the Parks and Tourism Commission and the state tourism is down due to people thinking the entire state is closed due to flooding. They are getting inquiries from out of state visitors asking if the state is closed. They put together a unified press release that the Arkansas River is flooded, but the rest of Arkansas is not and is open for business. They are also putting out a map on what roads are closed. They will do a media blitz of this information on social media and the local news stations. They are also putting out a release that E. Coli only closed the State Park beach at Ouachita, and all other beaches are open. Bill B. asked if the Corps would pass this along to Vicksburg.

Jerry asked about the fisheries grant. Amy will send out the email with the grant information to the committee members. Al G. asked about the status of non-native aquatic vegetation. Dustin stated the Corps would be doing a survey later this month, and he would provide an update. They also conduct a survey in September. Dustin also shared information on the upcoming Cedar Glade restoration and cedar utilization for fish habitat.

Bill B. moved to adjourn, Jon S. seconded. Meeting adjourned @ 7:10