**Friends of Lake Ouachita**

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1201 Blakely Dam Road

Royal, AR 71968

**MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD:** Friends of Lake Ouachita Committee Minutes

**DATE:** June 7, 2021

**CALL TO ORDER:** 6:00 PM by Jerry Shields

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

Stacy Sigman, Resource Manager, Lake Ouachita Field Office

Derick Walker, Supervisory Park Ranger, Lake Ouachita Field Office

Amy Shultz, Natural Resource Specialist, Lake Ouachita Field Office

**Guests Present:**

Amanda Walrod, Caddo-Womble District Ranger

Makayla McDonald (Granddaughter of Jo West Taylor)

**Members Present:**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| Alan Atkins | Ron Mayfield | Jo West Taylor |
| Bill Barnes | Bill Pell | Dan Watson |
| Robert Cavanaugh | Shane Scott | Jerry Williams |
| George Dooley | Jerry Shields |  |
| Al Gathright | John Simpson |  |

**Review of Minutes:** Motion was made to approve April 05 minutes, Jo W. seconded, minutes approved as written

**Wal-Mart Foundation Trail Maintenance Agreement:** Al shared they had a meet and greet luncheon with the Arkansas Parks and Recreation Foundation, and it went well. They learned that in addition to the grants received from the foundation, the recreation foundation will also provide a work crew to perform maintenance on the LOViT. The $5K and $10K grants will be annual and will go to enhance the Womble, Ouachita, and LOViT trails. Jerry S. requested committee members brainstorm enhancements they would like to see added to the LOViT as possible projects for the grant funding. He requested FOLO members bring their ideas to the table at the August meeting and committee could vote on what they would like to see done. Jerry discussed possibility of adding interpretive signs/dioramas and locations these would enhance such as the old homesteads near Tompkins Bend. Alan A. mentioned West Mountain had just updated their signage and Mary Hill oversaw this project. He suggested talking to her about trail signs. Robert C. suggested building a few elevated walkways along the trail and extending the trail west. Al also shared Chuck Woods (IMBA) had a crew here last week that cleared trees and did corridor work on Bear Mountain. Dan W. is in the process of updating the webpage with a spreadsheet like FOOT uses to track work.

**Grab-A-Bag:** New signs were ordered with name changed to FOLO instead of LOCFC. Bags were purchased to hopefully last the remainder of the year.

**2021 Lake Cleanup:** Jo W. shared the cleanup is set for September 25th from 8:00a.m.-11:00a.m. The cleanup is advertised on Keep Arkansas Beautiful and Keep America Beautiful websites. She asked members to track any hours they donate cleaning up the lake during the summer and they can submit these with cleanup numbers. She also suggested committee members bring in other groups to assist with the cleanup. Amanda Walrod requested a flyer to distribute. Jo W. stated she would send her a flyer. Jerry shared they used to invite 4-H groups, Ameri-Corps groups, etc...

Jerry shared pictures of a jeep on top of the Hickory Nut Mtn. Vista wall and discussed challenges you face with vandalism in remote locations.

**USACE Operational Review:**

-ADA/Watchable Wildlife Trail Update:Jerry thanked the Corps for hauling off the large tree that was down at the ADA trail and for planting new trees. Stacy S. shared the paved section of the ADA is still too wet from rains to repair.

-General’s visit in April Feedback: Stacy shared the General’s visit went well. She wanted to visit with the stakeholders, and Bill Barnes along with Jerry Shields visited with her and shared positive comments about their partnership with the Corps. Stacy stated it was a very successful visit.

-Tompkins Bend Courtesy Dock: Derick W. shared the courtesy dock at Tompkins has been opened and closed a lot the past few months due to the rainfall and fluctuating water levels. Stacy stated the Corps must be more careful due to the Tort claim filed due to a fall last year. Jerry suggested building a temporary ramp.

-Tree planting: Derick shared some tree planting pictures, he further stated that most of the rangers are working 100% on recreation, but at times, Natural Resource Specialist, Joe Bailey has been able to take one ranger and plant trees or raise the canopy at the restrooms. Derick also shared the Corps is installing LED lights at the restrooms which will increase public safety and cut down maintenance cost in the long run. The Corps has repaired the roadway with a cold patch at Highway 27 boat ramp. There is currently a culvert that has washed out in Denby Point that will be repaired soon.

Al G. asked about the Corps at DeGray partnering with AGFC to plant water willows, and asked if that would be something Lake Ouachita would be interested in. Stacy will talk with Dustin and find out what they are working on at DeGray.

Jerry shared that Amanda Walrod had requested to do a presentation on the glade restoration at one of the FOLO meetings. This is a partnership between the Forest Service, Corps, and Nature Conservancy.

Alan A. shared the AGFC has been placing signs at the boat ramps about aquatic nuisance species and warning boaters to drain their live wells after boating.

Jerry shared there will not be a meeting in July, so next meeting will be first Monday in August.

**Adjournment:** Meeting was adjourned at 6:40 P.M.