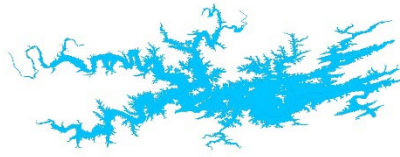


Friends of Lake Ouachita



1424 Blakely Dam Road
Royal, AR 71968

MEMORANDUM FOR RECORD: Friends of Lake Ouachita Committee Minutes

DATE: May 5, 2025

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers:

Eric Jenkins, Project Manager, Lake Ouachita Project Office
Stacy Sigman, Lake Manager, Lake Ouachita Field Office
Derick Walker, Supervisory Natural Resources Specialist, Lake Ouachita Field Office
Matt Mitchell, Supervisory Facility Operations Specialist, Lake Ouachita Field Office
Amy Shultz, Natural Resources Specialist, Lake Ouachita Field Office

Members Present:

Bill Barnes	George Dooley	Bill Pell	Jo West Taylor
Tom Butler	Al Gathright	Shane Scott	Jerry Williams
Robert Cavanaugh	Ron Mayfield	Jerry Shields	

Call to Order: Meeting started at 6:00 PM.

Approval of April 2025 Minutes: Robert C. moved to approve the April 7, 2025, minutes, Jo W. seconded. Minutes approved as written.

May Financial Report: Jerry S. shared FOLO had received the 15K fish habitat grant for the second year in a row, and explained it is a non-matching grant. Ron M. shared they were receiving approx. \$47-\$50/month from people requesting the trail maps through the FarOut app. He also shared users can post and see comments on camping information on the map and see reports of downed trees on the trails. Jerry will send out the link to the app to FOLO members and Corps. Jerry shared they had \$209,335 at the end of April with 150K of this invested in CD's.

FOLO Appreciation Awards Presentation:

Jerry S. along with all FOLO members presented Eric Jenkins and Stacy Sigman a framed personalized wood art map of Lake Ouachita for their partnership and service to the Corps and FOLO. Eric and Stacy thanked the group for their years of volunteer service and shared their appreciation for the gifts and the work FOLO has accomplished.

ARDOT ADA Walkway Grant Status: Tom B. shared and discussed the guidelines for advertising and opening bids for federal-aid projects. Solicitation of bids must be advertised two times in a statewide paper. The proposed schedule would be 5/12-5/19 for first round and 5/19-5/26 for second round of advertising. Bids would be opening on June 9th if this proposal is accepted by ARDOT. The solicitation for bids must be advertised 21 days ahead of receiving bids. Tom shared the contracts must pay federal wage requirements and must be advertised in a statewide published paper. George D. suggested it would be good to follow up with companies already previously contacted, which they will do. Tom B. shared there is a lot of federal documentation requirements for the bids, and once bids are in, they must be read at a public meeting where ARDOT representatives are present along with member of FOLO and a Corps representative. Stacy requested Derick W. and Scott C. be added to the list of attendees and offered the Corps office as a meeting location. Jerry S. shared he received a call from Elmer Hand and Mr. Hand contacted the supplier of the materials and notified him the contractor would be calling soon for bids.

Beyond the Pond Grant: Jerry shared FOLO had received the 15K Beyond the Pond grant and asked if there were any updates from Corps of Engineers. Amy S. shared they had a meeting with Dustin Thomason and Jesse Hollifield, and they are pricing the synthetic boards. If they use synthetic, they will last much longer but will have to cut the number of structures down since the cost is higher for the synthetic boards. Amy shared Dustin was in the process of getting prices from several companies for the synthetic and then will send the proposal to Beyond the Pond for approval to make sure it is ok to cut the number of bream beds. Amy further shared they would get school groups in the fall to work on construction of the bream beds.

2025 Lake Clean-Up plans: Jo W. proposed September 26th -27th or October 3rd-4th as dates for lake cleanup. Committee decided to try for week of October 3rd for kids and community cleanup. Amy will contact the State Park to find out their cleanup date.

Homestead Trailhead Historical Site Reconstruction: Jerry S. shared the rail fencing is falling around the old well site at homestead trail, and people are knocking out rocks and getting into it. He requested funding for work on the fence repair around the hand dug well. He would also like funding to order interpretive signs to be placed at the homestead.

Announcements: Ron M. shared the 23rd shelter on the Ouachita trail was completed this week and sits in the middle of the trail. It has lounge chairs that are very popular with hikers.

Corps 2025 Operational Issues/Lake Level Status/ Staffing Issues:

Derick W. shared the lake level is good now at 577.9'. During the flooding event, the lake rose 6 ½ feet in less than 3 days and 170 campsites had to be closed. Currently the Corps is doing debris cleanup and assessing and doing damage reports. Derick shared there was additional

damage to the sea wall at Brady on the point. Also, the sand that was piled and ready to spread at beach areas was partially taken away by the flooding, and some of the Little Fir campsites were damaged. Derick shared the Corps is still in a hiring freeze and unable to hire any seasonal help. The ranger staff is operating at 6 less than last summer, and there will not be a full-time boat patrol. Matt M. shared O&M is down two maintenance mechanics. There are also less contractors this year, so services will be more limited. Jerry S. asked questions about campground hosts and reservations. Amy S. shared the Corps was one short on volunteer hosts for the fee booths, and that volunteers only worked 20 hrs./week checking in and out reservations, and did not have to stay in fee booth their entire shift, so they might not see them if they drive through, but they make rounds at least twice during their work shift and check in/out reservations from their phones or iPad. Jerry also asked if there were areas not 100% reservable through Recreation.gov. Derick explained other than the free camping areas on the north side and Twin Creek where you pay at fee machine, all the Corps campgrounds were 100% through recreation.gov.

Adjournment: George D. moved to adjourn, and Tom B. seconded. Meeting adjourned @6:57P.M.