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# Taking Flight

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**An Introduction to  
Building Refuge Friends Organizations**



*Greater sandhill cranes* ©John and Karen Hollingsworth

**A National Wildlife Association Publication**



# Taking Flight

## An Introduction to Building Refuge Friends Organizations



**National Wildlife Refuge Association**  
1010 Wisconsin Avenue, NW, Suite 200  
Washington, D.C. 20007

**2002**

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In Memory  
of

**Mildred Miller Clark**  
1923-1997

Mildred was co-editor of the  
*Refuge Reporter*  
and was  
a true champion  
for the  
National Wildlife Refuge System.

# A Message from Evan Hirsche

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## President of the National Wildlife Refuge Association



In 1994, the Board of Directors of the National Wildlife Refuge Association made an important decision. They agreed that citizen support groups (“Friends”) were critical to the protection and perpetuation of the National Wildlife Refuge System. For this reason, the Board added Friends group development and training to their strategic plan.

At that time, no formal programs existed to support Friends groups. Many established refuge Friends groups were struggling with issues such as board organization, developing strong partnerships with refuge management, effective advocacy, and fundraising. Newly forming organizations were also struggling with basic issues such as how to write by-laws and apply for non-profit status.

For this reason, the National Wildlife Refuge Association launched the Friends Initiative in October 1996 with grant funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the George Gund Foundation, Plum Creek Foundation, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

When we began the Initiative, it was clear that one of our first priorities would be to create a handbook on how to get a Friends group started – everyone was asking for some form of written “How to Do It” guide. We decided that the best way to write this guide was to ask the experts – go to the experienced Friends groups and ask them “What are the Keys to Success in organizing a Friends group?” In January 1997, we held a workshop that was attended by private citizens and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service staff that were the Friends experts. These people shared their knowledge with us and this handbook is a compilation of their work.

The National Wildlife Refuge Association is pleased to provide you with this handbook. We hope you will join us and your fellow citizens in supporting our National Wildlife Refuge System by starting or joining a Friends group. The personal rewards are tremendous and our refuge system will benefit immeasurably from your help.

# National Wildlife Refuge Association

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## Mission and Focus

The National Wildlife Refuge Association is the only national membership organization dedicated solely to protecting and perpetuating the National Wildlife Refuge System. Our mission is to protect, enhance and expand the National Wildlife Refuge System, lands set aside by the American people to protect our country's diverse wildlife heritage. We advocate increased Congressional funding and improved policies to maintain a healthy and properly managed wildlife refuge system capable of sustaining diverse plants and wildlife. Combining a Washington, D.C. headquarters, regional representatives and members from around the country, the NWRA is a leader, mobilizing citizen support for refuges.

The National Wildlife Refuge Association works to ensure that our national system of wildlife refuges is protected today and for generations to come. Since its 1975 founding, the National Wildlife Refuge Association has also worked to:

- Increase public awareness, involvement, and support for wildlife refuges
- Promote cooperation among varied conservation and environmental groups
- Protect individual refuges from threats to wildlife habitat
- Improve the management and protection of the Refuge System by providing information to administrations and Congressional decision makers
- Influence legislation that defines the future of the Refuge System
- Advocate for adequate funding and improved policy guidance for the Refuge System
- Network with Friends groups and supporting their actions on behalf of refuges.

*Visit us on RefugeNET!*

**[www.refugenet.org](http://www.refugenet.org)**

For up-to-date information on the Friends Initiative, NWRA, legislation, refuge activities, and more . . .

# History of the Friends Initiative

1994	1995	1996	1997
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October National Wildlife Refuge Association (NWRA) adds Friends group training and development to its strategic plan.

1994	1995	1996	1997
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December NWRA submits Friends Initiative grant proposal to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF). Goals of the project included identifying existing Friends groups, helping new groups get started, and developing a resource handbook.

1994	1995	1996	1997
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March President Clinton signs Executive Order on the Management and General Public Use of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

May US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) sponsors a workshop: From Executive Order to Collective Action. Participants Friends groups as the highest priority for strengthening the refuge system.  
NFWF hosts first Friends Initiative Roundtable to discuss building Friends groups and implementing NWRA's Friends Initiative.

October NWRA officially begins work on the Friends Initiative project.  
FWS receives funds to sponsor a Friends mentoring program to provide one-on-one training to refuge staff and new Friends group members. It also receives funds to conduct a Friends workshop for refuge managers.  
National Audubon Society launches its Audubon Refuge Keepers (ARK) program designed to stimulate citizen action on refuges through local Audubon chapters.

1994	1995	1996	1997
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January NWRA sponsors first meeting of Friends group leaders and FWS staff. "Keys to Success" are discussed and an outline for a handbook is developed.  
NWRA begins national surveys of Friends groups and refuge managers.

March FWS launches its Friends mentoring program.

July FWS sponsors its first workshop for refuge managers and park superintendents on Friends groups.

August NWRA publishes first Refuge Friends Group Directory.

October FWS funds Friends mini-grant program. \$100,000 to \$125,000 will be made available to Friends groups. The program is administered as a cooperative effort between the FWS, NWRA, NFWF, and NAS.

November NWRA launches Friends Initiative phase two, to include workshops, networking opportunities, improved communications systems, and direct technical and financial assistance.



1998	1999	2000
January	Audubon's ARK Program grows to more than 35 refuge support groups.	
August	NWRA, NAS, NFWF and FWS disburse 50 mini-grants to Friends groups, for a total of \$180,500, to support start-up and capacity-building activities as well as specific projects.	
October	First regional network of Friends groups, the Friends of Refuges Mid-Atlantic (FORMA), begins to take shape.	

1998	1999	2000
March	NWRA and Audubon host 20 Friends groups in Washington, DC for an advocacy bootcamp. Friends lobby their lawmakers for increased Refuge System funding.	
November	NWRA hosts the Friends Academy, a three-day workshop to build Friends groups' skills in the areas of board development, fundraising and volunteer management.	

1998	1999	2000
March	NWRA publishes its second resource manual, entitled <i>Building Your Nest Egg: An Introduction to Raising Funds for National Wildlife Refuge Support Groups</i> .	
May	Audubon's ARK Program includes more than 75 refuge support groups.	
May	NWRA's new president, Evan Hirsche, makes Friends a top priority in the Association's five-year business plan. NWRA and FWS begin to plan the first annual National Refuge Friends Conference.	
November	Fifteen Friends groups participate in a pilot media project, providing grassroots support for the efforts of the Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement (CARE). Project is highly successful, with widespread media coverage of the Refuge System funding crisis.	
February	More than 220 Friends, representing 102 refuges and 43 states, gather in Washington D.C. at the first annual National Refuge Friends Conference for a weekend of skills-building and networking sponsored by the FWS and NWRA. More than 130 Friends lobby their lawmakers for increased refuge funding.	

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*“Friends Group” is defined as any formal organization whose mission is to support the goals and purposes of its associated refuge and the National Wildlife Refuge System overall. This includes Friends Organizations and Cooperating and Interpretive Associations.*

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**“Why are you involved in the Friends group?” \***

*“The refuge is a part of our community.”*

– Molly Brown,  
Friends of Back Bay,  
Virginia Beach,  
Virginia.

*“I live here.”*

– Jackie Peoples,  
Partnership for the  
Sounds, Columbia,  
North Carolina.

*“A love of wildlife and the Refuge, as well as the time to give of my talents.”*

– Marilyn Kloosterman,  
“Ding” Darling Wildlife  
Society

*“As a long time volunteer in the field of recreation and parks with an interest in wildlife and conservation, I wanted to try and make a difference.”*

– Harlen Tucker,  
Friends Of  
Patuxent Wildlife  
Research Center

\*Friends Survey,  
NWRA, 1997

## Our Vision . . .

Our Vision for the Friends Initiative is to promote the development of local Friends organizations that will provide an independent citizen voice for the protection, conservation and enhancement of fish and wildlife and their habitats for the benefit of present and future generations.

The National Wildlife Refuge Association is committed to strengthening existing and perpetuating the creation of new Friends organizations that:

- Are informed of and support the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System;
- Provide a positive community influence and act as a doorway to the public;
- Are independent advocates working to protect the natural resource;
- Strive to influence support for the local refuge and the National Wildlife Refuge System overall;
- Cooperate with other Friends organizations locally, regionally, and nationally and participate whenever possible in collaborative programs with these groups as well as with the National Wildlife Refuge Association;
- Strive to maintain a relationship of cooperation and mutual respect with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service personnel; and
- Adhere to high ethical standards of behavior applicable to private nonprofit charitable organizations and adhere to all reporting requirements and other regulations as required by state and federal law.

## About this handbook

When the National Wildlife Refuge Association launched the Friends Initiative, it was clear that a basic guide book was needed to help citizens form new refuge Friends groups. Around the country, citizens were “reinventing the wheel,” spending precious time and energy figuring out how to file for non-profit status or deciding what the Board of Directors would do.

*Taking Flight* is written for use by both citizens and refuge staff who are working to form a new Friends group. Because there is so much information we could offer in this handbook, we had to make some difficult decisions about what to include and what to leave out. To help us, we decided that the book should do the following:

- Give new or forming Friends groups and refuge staff the tools to get started during the first year of organization.
- Give Friends groups and refuge staff an overview, a distillation of information in a quick, easy, and readable format.
- Teach Friends groups and refuge staff the importance of forming and maintaining relationships that are built around the natural resource.

To write this handbook, we consulted the experts – those citizens and refuge staff who had experienced a long history of success with a Friends group. The National Wildlife Refuge Association convened a meeting in January 1997, where these Friends experts described the “keys to success” in organizing and developed a model process for building a Friends group. This handbook is a compilation of their stories, insights and wisdom.

As you form your Friends group, you will have many questions that are not fully answered in this book. However, we believe that *Taking Flight* provides the basic tools you will need to get started. We hope you will agree that this book is a useful tool in building your organization.

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Note: The National Wildlife Refuge Association grants permission to reprint any part of this handbook. Please credit *Taking Flight* and National Wildlife Refuge Association in any copies made.

# National Wildlife Refuge Association Friends Meeting, January 1997

## Meeting Participants, Speakers, Observers, and Facilitators

### Friends Groups

Helen Bain	Friends of Bon Secour NWR	AL
Edgar Bristow	Atlantic Audubon	NJ
Molly Brown	Friends of Back Bay	VA
Kurt Buchholtz	Rocky Mountain Nature Association	CO
Edward Crozier	Friends of Minnesota Valley and NWRA	MN
Ann Haines	Friends of the Minnesota Valley NWR	MN
Beverly Heinze-Lacey	Friends of Parker River NWR and NWRA	MA
Richard Hickner	Friends of Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge	TX
Carol Kolash	Rocky Mountain Arsenal Wildlife Society	CO
Molly Krival	Ding Darling Wildlife Society	FL
Florence LaRiviere	Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge	CA
Emerson Learn	Friends of Bosque del Apache	NM
Jane Storm	St Marks Refuge Association	FL
Penny Thomsen	Friends of Walnut Creek NWR	IA
Tana Watt	Friends of Mashpee NWR	MA
Frank Wolff	Friends of Blackwater NWR Association, Inc.	MD

### U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Janet AdyNational	Education and Training Center	WV
Rick Coleman	US Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 1	OR
George Constantino	US Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 7	AK
Tony Leger	US Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 5	MA
Patricia Martinkovic	Long Island NWR Complex	NY
Phil Norton	Bosque del Apache NWR	NM
Allyson Rowell	US Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Refuges	VA
John Stasko	Back Bay NWR	VA
Tom Worthington	US Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 3	MN

### National Wildlife Refuge Association and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

William Ashe	National Wildlife Refuge Association	MA
Karen Hollingsworth	National Wildlife Refuge Association	CO
Kathleen Pickering	National Fish and Wildlife Foundation	DC

### Speakers and Observers

Angeline Andrew	National Wildlife Refuge Association	NH
Sarah Bevilacqua	US Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 5	MA
Jim and Mildred Clark	Refuge Reporter	VA
Anne Criss	National Wildlife Refuge Association	DC
Dan Ashe	US Fish and Wildlife Service, External Affairs	DC
Ronald Lambertson	US Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 5	MA
Robert Shallenberger	US Fish and Wildlife Service, Division of Refuges	VA
Robert Streeter	US Fish and Wildlife Service, Directorate	DC
David Tobin	National Wildlife Refuge Association	DC
Lora Wondolowski	National Audubon Society	DC

### Facilitators

Jim Feldt and Wes Wyens	Institute of Community Area Development/University of Georgia
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## Acknowledgements

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First and foremost, we want to thank the participants in the National Wildlife Refuge Association's Friends Meeting held in January 1997 at Virginia Beach. It was their ideas and comments that have formed the backbone of this handbook. This handbook would not have been possible without their help. The full list of names is provided earlier in this section.

We would also like to thank the many people who reviewed and edited the draft version of this handbook, including: Janet Ady, Sarah Bevilaqua, Molly Brown Edward Crozier, John Fillio, Malcolm Fraser, Ann Haines, Karen Hollingsworth, George Hoffman, James Lacey, Molly Krival, Patricia Martinkovic, Phil Norton, Allyson Rowell, Frank Wolff, and Thomas Worthington. In addition, we want to thank Angeline Andrew for helping us gather background material for this handbook and Laurie Hagar for designing the handbook's layout.

Special thanks goes to Karen Hollingsworth who provided the photographs that appear throughout this handbook.

In addition, we especially want to thank John ("Jack") Fillio and the staff at Parker River National Wildlife Refuge for making room for us under really tight conditions. They have welcomed us with open arms and we have greatly enjoyed their camaraderie and good humor.

We also want to acknowledge Allyson Rowell for her support and interest in the Friends Initiative. She has been instrumental in gaining support for the Initiative throughout the US Fish and Wildlife Service. We have appreciated her good sense of humor and sincerity, which has helped keep us moving forward.

And finally, we want to thank all the Friends groups and US Fish and Wildlife Service staff who have supported this effort with their ideas, suggestions, and encouragement.

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*Great egret, J.N. "Ding" Darling NWR, Florida*

# Introduction

# What is the National Wildlife Refuge System?

President Theodore Roosevelt created the first refuge on Florida's Pelican Island in 1903. He used the power of the Presidency to put a stop to the destruction of breeding colonies of brown pelicans whose feathers were used in the millinery industry. Roosevelt, a lifelong conservationist and big game hunter saw an end to the country's seemingly boundless resources, something many of his contemporaries could not imagine. Roosevelt did something about it. He went on to set up 52 more refuges, some for the protection of big game species such as bears, deer and elk.

Roosevelt said:

*"Defenders of the short-sighted men who in their greed and selfishness will, if permitted, rob our country of half its charm by their reckless extermination of all useful and beautiful wild things sometimes seek to champion them by saying that 'the game belongs to the people.' So it does; and not merely to the people now alive, but to the unborn people. The 'greatest good of the greatest number' applies to the number within the womb of time, compared to which those now alive form but an insignificant fraction."*

Now, a century later, with more than 540 refuges, the National Wildlife Refuge System manages a unique and valuable array of more than 94 million acres set aside to preserve and protect the diversity of this country's natural environment and its

*Continued on page 3*

**1903** Executive order signed by Theodore Roosevelt establishes Pelican Island, Florida, as a "preserve and breeding ground for native birds." During two terms in office, Roosevelt establishes more than 50 National Wildlife Refuges and withdraws enough land from the control of commercial interests to provide space for future refuges, along with lands for national park and forest systems. In 30 years, the system expands to 1.6 million acres.

**1934** Congress passes the Migratory Bird Hunting Stamp Act to provide funds for the purchase of migratory bird habitat.

## The Story of the First Refuge

## Pelican Island, FL

*Pelican Island, the first refuge, had its start in citizen action carried out by the country's very first refuge manager, Paul Kroegel. The following is an excerpt from an interview with J.T. Thompson, Kroegel's, daughter, written by Phil Million which appeared in the Fish and Wildlife News, Jan. 1979. She tells how her father became the manager of the Pelican Island*

*Refuge. The story vividly illustrates the power of one or two people when they put their passion behind a cause: "...Attracted by the Homestead Act and the lure of balmy weather, more and more people were coming to Florida's east coast at this time. The gradual increase in boat traffic spelled trouble for the highly visible - and highly vulnerable - colony*

*of pelicans inhabiting Pelican Island. "One must remember these were freewheeling times. Game laws were practically non-existent. Plume hunters were devastating waterfowl in the Everglades to supply the fashion industry's demand for feathers. One observer pretty well summed up human behavior toward wildlife on Florida's*

wild creatures. Waterfowl Production Areas (WPA's) add nearly 2 million more acres in the north central region of the country. These small "prairie pothole" wetlands are managed to preserve breeding, migrating and wintering habitat for waterfowl. On average over 200,000 acres of new lands are added to the refuge system every year.

The refuge system is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service of the Department of the Interior, in the Executive branch of government. Today it preserves diverse ecosystems with over 220 species of mammals, more than 700 species of birds, 250 reptiles and amphibians and over 200 species of fish, including 168 threatened and endangered species. The system stretches from Alaska to the Florida Keys, and from Maine to the Trust Islands in the Pacific. There are refuges in Guam, Puerto Rico, and American Samoa. Your refuge is but one link in a large chain that makes up the National Wildlife Refuge System.

A success story? It certainly is. **Yet, the future of the refuge system is threatened and refuges need help from local citizens.**

The Refuge System is burdened by public ignorance and neglect and survives mainly due to the dedication of employees who manage it and the volunteers who help them. The varied challenges of managing individual refuges are met every day by dedicated refuge managers and their staffs whose problems vary from refuge to refuge. Inadequate funding is the basic issue which plagues nearly every one.

While the national park system receives about \$16 per acre in annual federal funding, the refuge system, with 14 million acres more land, will receive

**1934** President Franklin D. Roosevelt appoints J.N. "Ding" Darling, chief of the Bureau of Biological Survey, then part of the Department of Agriculture, the agency in charge of what will become the National Wildlife Refuge System. Darling hired J. Clark Salyer II, a young biologist who traveled around the country to identify likely sites for refuges. Refuge system expands to 5.6 million acres.

**1940** Fish & Wildlife Service formally established under the Department of the Interior. The Refuge System grows to 9.6 million acres in the lower 48 states, 8 million more acres in Alaska.

**1960**'s Land and Water Conservation Fund set up to collect revenues from offshore drilling leases used to increase public space for outdoor recreation, and to supplement duck stamp sales.

## The Story of . . .

## Pelican Island, FL

*waterways in the late 1870's when he reported: 'Practically all tourists were armed with rifles, shotguns, revolvers, or all three. These armed men lined the rails of the steamboats and shot ad libitum at alligators, waterfowl, or anything that made an attractive target. There were practically no restrictions on shooting, although the steamers never stopped to gather in the game, but left it where it fell.'"*

*Mrs. Thompson remembers well her father's accounts of those days of trouble for his beloved pelicans: "The channel was such that boats had to go within 100 feet of Pelican Island. When the boats got close, the pelicans would just rise up and hover around them. And that's when people started shooting at the pelicans. Well, daddy saw what was happening and he just had to do something about it."*

*What he did was begin an intensive lobbying campaign on behalf of the birds. According to Mrs. Thompson, one valuable, if unsung, ally in this campaign was a Mrs. Latham who ran a popular fishing lodge a few miles away and numbered among her clientele various "big people from Washington." When such VIP's were in residence, she would send word to Kroegel via the mail*

about \$3 per acre in 2003. Currently a funding backlog of nearly \$2-billion leaves refuge managers unable to manage these lands to a level that will maintain their integrity into the future. It is a shortfall that endangers the mission of the refuge system: to preserve these lands for future generations.

The bottom line: While some progress is being made, the National Wildlife Refuge System is still understaffed and underfunded. The public either doesn't understand or is unaware of the mission of refuges for wildlife first. Members of Congress need to be fully informed about the value of our refuges and encouraged to ensure adequate funding.

**That's where citizens can make a difference on refuges.**

They can help ensure that refuge lands are protected and preserved, that their mission in protecting wildlife is not compromised, and that Congress allocates sufficient funds and supports positive legislation that preserve the system. They provide refuges with critical support by volunteering, raising funds and educating the public. Many citizens have increased their effectiveness by banding together and forming Friends Groups.

Friends groups play a critical role in helping the public understand the importance of protecting and preserving our refuges – in essence, they act as refuge “ambassadors.” Friends groups have proven to be highly effective partners in working to improve the ability of refuges to meet their missions.

**1973** Endangered Species Act authorized the purchase of refuge lands to protect a wide variety of wildlife and plants.

**1980** Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act expands the existing Alaska refuges by 13.7 million acres, and establishes 40 million acres of new refuges. The refuge system more than doubles in size.

**1994** The 500th refuge is added - Canaan Valley Refuge in West Virginia.

**1996** President Clinton signs a landmark executive order which clearly defines and reaffirms the mission, guiding principles and priority public uses of the National Wildlife Refuge System: “...to preserve a national network of lands and waters for the conservation and management of the fish, wildlife, and plants of the United States for the benefit of present and future generations.”

**The Story of . . .**

**Pelican Island, FL**

*boat that ran between Titusville and Stewart.*

*“The mailman would come by and say so-and-so is there and my father would go right up there and use all the influence he possibly could to get the pelicans some help from Washington.”*

*Another important enlistee in Kroegel's cause was the famous ornithologist, Dr. Frank*

*M. Chapman, who was later to describe Pelican Island's bird colony as “the most interesting in my experience.” Chapman, already heavily engaged in the battle to halt the plume trade, helped spread the word about the need to protect the pelicans.*

*“What my father wanted to do was get word through to President Roosevelt.” Mrs. Thomp-*

*son says. “He wanted Pelican Island to be a Federal reservation so he would have the power to keep people off the island.”*

*Roosevelt made him the manager of the refuge in 1903.*

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*“You’re REALLY missing the boat if you don’t have one!”*

—Leland (Lee) E. Herzberger, Refuge Manager, Muscatatuck NWR  
(Refuge Manager Survey, NWRA, 1997)

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## What are Friends and why are they so important?

Friends groups are made up of lots of “regular folks”: students, teachers, carpenters, bankers, nurses, professors, retirees. The one thing these people have in common is that they care about the refuge as a natural resource and work to protect it. Their concern for the resource spurs them into action to organize a Friends group that is dedicated to promoting and perpetuating their local refuge.

Few people know that the refuge in their area is a part of a larger national system, that the refuge system is under-funded, and lacks political support. Friends groups can promote the system by helping their local community understand the mission of the refuge as a place for wildlife first.

Starting with their local refuge, each individual can make a difference to the whole refuge system and help to ensure its future. Friends of refuges not only get their hands dirty donating time, energy and sweat, they also perform the critical mission of public outreach — of communicating the refuge story not just to the general public, but to lawmakers who legislate the future of refuge lands. An effective Friends group can bring a strong and powerful voice to their local refuge. The collective action of volunteer groups communicating the importance of their local refuges then strengthens the refuge system as a whole.

Friends groups may also be non-profit organizations, but some are organized strictly as advocacy groups and may not meet IRS requirements for tax-deductible status. Many Friends groups have formal, written agreements that define their relationship with their local refuge (Memorandum of Agreement or Cooperative Agreement). While these are encouraged and are useful documents, they are not required to become a refuge Friends group.

**1997** President Clinton signs the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act. The Act declares that compatible wildlife-dependent recreational uses are legitimate priority public uses of refuges. The six uses — hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography, environmental education and interpretation — are to receive enhanced consideration in planning and management over all other general public uses of the Refuge System. When planning for expanded and new refuges and when making refuge management decisions, the Act requires effective coordination with other federal agencies, state fish and wildlife or conservation agencies and refuge neighbors. This was an invitation to embrace Support Groups and volunteers of all types.

**1998** President Clinton signs the National Wildlife Refuge System Volunteer and Community Partnership Enhancement Act. The Act greatly expands public involvement in the National Wildlife Refuge System and reaffirms the commitment and need to work with volunteers and partners to expand the ability to accomplish the mission of the Refuge System. The Act specifically focuses on enhancement of partnerships, volunteers and educational opportunities.

**2000** Congress overwhelmingly passes the National Wildlife Refuge System Centennial Act. This law broadens public understanding and appreciation for the Refuge System by expanding partnerships for their care and strengthening the infrastructure of the 540 refuges that make up the System; calls for the establishment of a Centennial Commission comprised of prominent American citizens and decision-makers; and tasks the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with developing a long-term plan to address the highest priority operations, maintenance, and construction needs of the Refuge System.

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*“As most who belong to our group, I have a love for the outdoors and its wildlife. Habitat and wildlife need all of the help all of us can give. Helping others is what makes the project work.”*

–Phil McClure, Muscatatuck Wildlife Society,  
Seymour, Indiana. (Friends Survey, NWRA, 1997)

---

## Friends groups are ...

- *Advocates for a local refuge and the National Wildlife Refuge System.*
- *Formal organizations designed to support the mission of a refuge.*
- *Private, independent organizations formed and managed by local citizens.*

## Friends groups are *not* ...

- *“Anti” groups*
- *A “mouthpiece” for refuge management or the Fish and Wildlife Service.*
- *Refuge managers.*

## What can Friends do to turn their concern into action?

- Volunteer for projects to improve refuge resources.
- Educate U.S. Representatives and Senators.
- Vote for legislation that supports the refuge system and its natural resources.
- Raise public awareness and interest in a refuge by: offering educational programs and festivals; writing letters to newspapers; and participating in community meetings.
- Raise funds to support refuge projects and programs.
- Join the NWRA. Stay informed.

---

*“(Having a Friends Group)... is an effective way to get work done, get funding for projects and increase refuge identity and outreach.”*

–Paul D. Daly, Refuge Manager, Bombay Hook NWR  
(Refuge Manager Survey, NWRA, 1997)

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*Salt marsh bird's beak, Tijuana Slough NWR, California*

# The Model Process



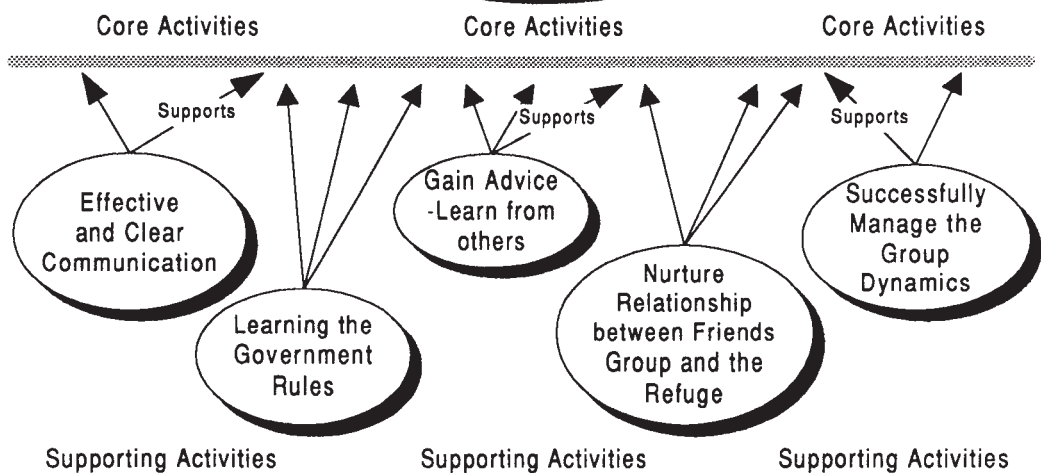
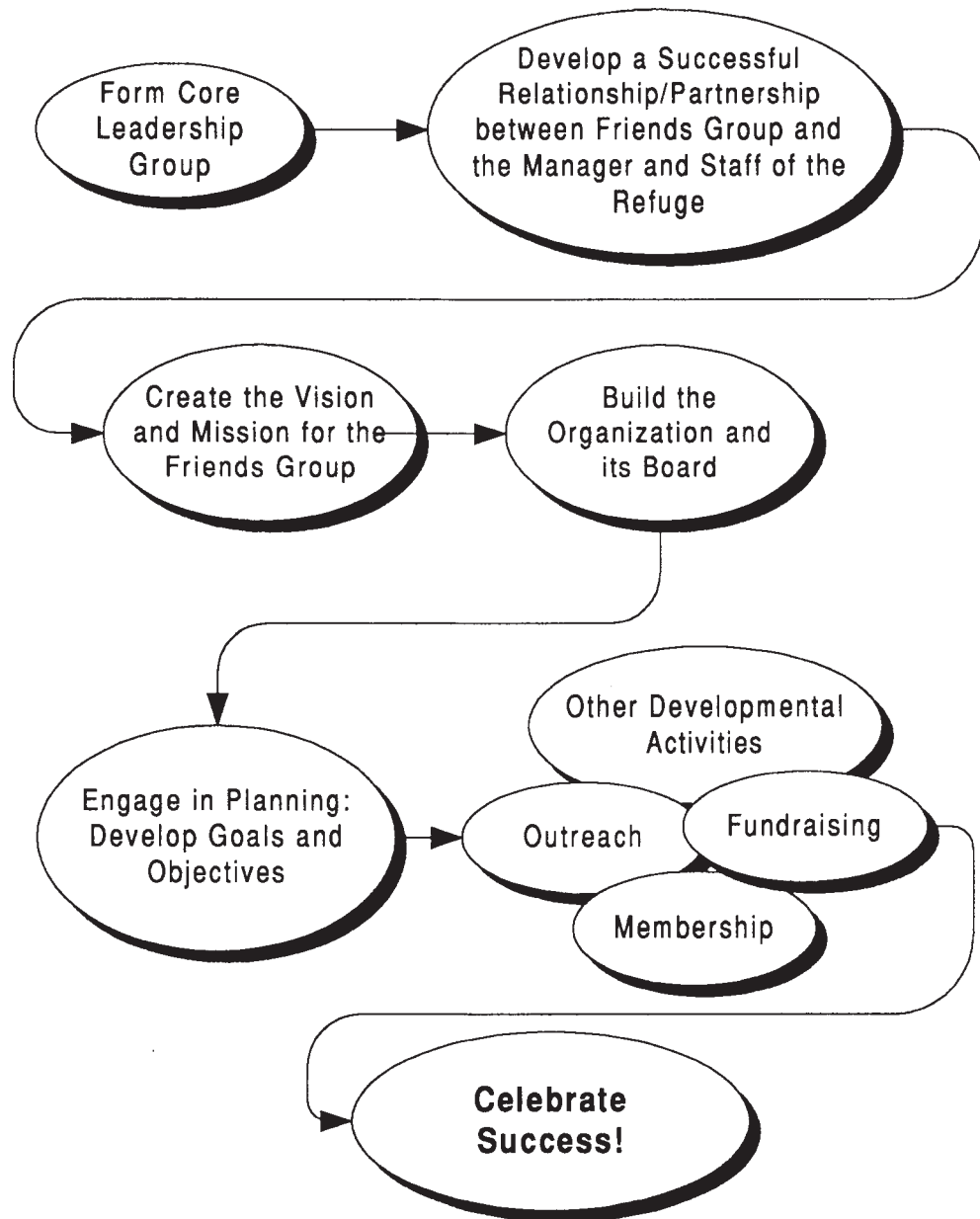
Courtesy Jim Clark, Refuge Reporter

### **Meeting Participants**

National Wildlife Refuge Association  
Friends Meeting  
January 31 through February 2, 1997  
Virginia Beach, Virginia



# The Model Process for starting a Friends group



# A Model Process for Starting a Friends Group

Around the country, there are a number of refuge Friends groups that have a great deal of experience and a long history of success. In January 1997, the National Wildlife Refuge Association convened a meeting of these groups and their affiliated Fish and Wildlife Service staff to tap into their expertise.

The meeting had several goals. One major goal was to develop an outline for this handbook. The twenty-eight participants shared their experiences and enthusiasm for the refuge system.

They shared their success stories and talked about their bumps and bruises too. Most importantly, everyone worked together to provide an outline of the most critical aspects of Friends group organization and development. Through their experiences, they described the “keys to success” and formulated a Model Process for Organizing a Friends Group.

These Friends experts agreed that while each group’s experience will be different, all will go through this model process as they organize and grow.

The remainder of this handbook describes the model process in detail. The appendix contains a number of tools and sample documents to help your group get started.

## **THE CORE GROUP**

*A core group of enthusiastic and energetic people perceive a need or see that a Friends group could make a difference for a refuge. That group engages in a dialogue with the refuge manager and staff.*

## **DEVELOP A PARTNERSHIP**

*The dialogue initiates the development of a partnership between the FWS staff and the Friends of the refuge. The substance of the dialogue is about the needs and issues confronting the natural resource and refuge.*

## **MISSION & VISION**

*The result of the interactions is an initial vision and mission for the Friends group. The Friends have been informally organized to that point.*

## **BUILD THE ORGANIZATION**

*The group begins to formalize their organization. They build the organization structure and develop the board.*

## **PLANNING**

*The Board of Directors then begin to develop plans for goals and programs that will help to fulfill the mission and to achieve the vision.*

## **OUTREACH & MEMBERSHIP**

*The Friends group then engages in outreach activities, builds and maintains its membership, and raises funds.*

## **CELEBRATE!**

*Along the way, the Friends group celebrates its successes, whether large or small.*

## ***Five foundations support this model process:***

- Good communication among members and between the FWS staff and friends.
- Learning about pertinent government processes, including coming to know who in the agency's hierarchy is the person who is authorized to make decision relative to the issues the Friends address.
- Consistent use of the network to ensure good advice from other friends groups, other non-profit organizations, and other resources, so that the Friends do not waste time and energy re-inventing the wheel.
- Continual effort to nurture the good relationship between the refuge staff and the friends.
- Wise attention to group dynamics.

### **The Story of ...**

*Each Friends group has a story to tell.*

*Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge started as a handful of citizens concerned about the loss of wetlands around San Francisco Bay. A core group was instrumental in an original Refuge Committee. In 1972, they got a bill passed into law to establish the existing refuge.*

### **Citizens Committee to Complete the Refuge**

*At an informal "kitchen table" meeting in 1985, the group expanded its efforts. One of the members proposed acquiring every remaining acre of wetlands around the Bay to double the size of the Refuge - some 20,000 more acres.*

*The campaign involved gathering support from all the cities and towns around the Bay. They gathered signatures, dis-*

*tributed bumper stickers, wrote and appeared in public service announcements, produced brochures, gathered the support of businesses and lawmakers and raised money.*

*In 1988, after a long campaign, a bill was passed in the House and the Senate to acquire every remaining acre of the Bay wetlands for the refuge, doubling its size.*





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*Antelope, Red Rock Lakes NWR, Montana*

# The Core Group

## Forming the Core Leadership

Every Friends group has its own unique story about how it got started. Most have stories of bumps and bruises along the way and also stories of great successes.

In some cases, one or two people recognized the need, talked with the refuge manager and formed a group.

In other cases, an issue arose that galvanized people into action — these people wanted to protect or establish a refuge and organized a group. In addition, there are cases where the refuge staff developed positive relationships with the community and the refuge was perceived as a good neighbor. In these cases, a Friends group formed because they were interested in helping their “neighbor in need.”

**Regardless of the reason for organizing, all groups got their start with a core group of community leaders who recognized the need for a Friends group.**

A strong core group is essential to beginning the process of forming a Friends organization.

While some of these groups are now mature with large memberships and budgets, each has also experienced great achievements while they were fledgling groups with a handful of dollars and only a few members.

### The Story of . . .

### Ding Darling Wildlife Society

*Ding Darling Wildlife Society got its start in 1982 as a cooperating association to support the mission of the refuge by offering interpretive and environmental education opportunities to visitors. The Society has grown to about 1,000 members. The local members donate 22,000 hours*

*in volunteer time and contribute about \$50,000 to fund projects for the refuge annually. After eight years of deriving income from a few shelves of books, membership dues and donations, the Society enclosed a visitor center deck to make a sales area. Recently, they*

*launched a drive to raise \$2 million to build a new visitor center. So far, they are approaching the halfway mark, and when they do, they plan to break ground.*

*“We are involved with the friends group because we can see results of our efforts; we have contributed financially; we have freely given our time because we believe that we are saving taxpayer dollars, while deriving great satisfaction for ourselves.”*

—Robert Jones, Okefenokee Wildlife League, Inc.,  
Folkston, Georgia (Friends Survey, NWRRA, 1997)

There are some common factors involved in forming the core leadership and beginning the process of organizing a group.

- ❑ Two to five highly dedicated, like minded people, are needed to start the process.
- ❑ The core group engages in dialogue with the refuge manager and staff to discuss the need for a Friends group.
- ❑ The core group begins to attract and recruit members to the board.
- ❑ The core group begins the work of developing a successful relationship with the refuge staff, and creating a vision and mission for the Friends group and building the organization.

## A GOOD LEADER

- Can lead without being overbearing.
- Has or is able to develop community connections.
- Has a flexible style.
- Has the ability to motivate and hold members accountable.
- Makes needed changes in board members in a diplomatic way.
- Is able to recognize talents and match them with what needs to be done.

## The Story of . . .

## Friends of Parker River NWR

*Friends of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge started in 1992 when its community was embroiled in a piping plover versus people controversy. With less than 50 members, the Friends helped to resolve the controversy. The piping plover was a protected species and the*

*Friends gained support from both the community and federal legislators. With only a handful of dedicated volunteers, this group sponsored a community-wide piping plover festival, which has since become an annual event. As a result of the work performed by this group,*

*the local community now sees the refuge as a valuable natural resource and is promoting ecotourism as a primary industry.*

## Where to look for core leaders

*Environmental organizations*

*School Board*

*Service clubs (Kiwanis, Lions)*

*Features, newspaper ads or letters to editor*

*Refuge volunteers*

*Conservation committees*

*City Council*

*Chamber of Commerce*

*Universities, technical schools*

*Students and teachers*

*Religious groups*

*Societies (historical, garden clubs)*

*Council on Aging, elder services*

*Sports enthusiasts (hunting, fishing)*

*Refuge neighbors*

*Other refuge partners*

## Look for core leaders who have:

- A real concern for the refuge.
- Some organizational skills.
- A willingness to “work” and not simply advise.
- Time to commit for an indefinite period and energy to get the friends group started.
- Enthusiasm.
- An ability to adapt to local geographical and cultural needs.

*“All journeys begin with the first step.”*

–Ed Bristow, Atlantic Audubon and Friends of Forsythe NWR

## What can I do to get them involved?

- Make phone calls
- Attend public meetings
- Prepare refuge slide shows
- Write letters to the newspaper
- Write feature articles
- Personal visits
- Ask prominent people in community for recommendations



## Words of Wisdom From Other Friends Groups

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The motto of the Walnut Creek Refuge Friends group is “Panic Forward!” That is, if you do not have the knowledge, skill, abilities, or money you think you need – just go out and get it.

---

“

Be careful about who you choose for board leadership; this start-up group can make or break the process.

~

Be sure to not “just take anybody,” — be sure to match people with needed skills.

~

Don’t be too limiting in creating your image or too narrow in your focus.

~

Develop a network so that you have others to turn to for answers and advice. The network can be other refuge Friends groups or other non-profit groups in your area.

~

Identify a resource person with non-profit experience to provide advice.

~

Speak with one united voice.

~

Study the successes of others.

~

Keep a sense of humor.

~

Get out and enjoy the refuge!

”

---

*“Realize it will take time, six months to a year to get things going.”*

Advice from Friends at  
the 1997 facilitated meeting in Virginia.

---

## Now What?

Now you've got two or three people interested in beginning the work of forming a group. What's next? Building relationships.

Begin by building a relationship with the refuge staff:

- Set up a meeting with the refuge manager
- Brainstorm ideas
- Begin networking

## Resources

- ✓ *Your Refuge Regional Office*
- ✓ *The National Wildlife Refuge Association*
- ✓ *US Fish and Wildlife Service Friends mentoring team*
- ✓ *Other established Friends groups (refuges, parks, libraries, hospitals, etc.)*
- ✓ *Other volunteer based organizations and other volunteer/leadership centers*
- ✓ *Local Audubon groups and other local environmental organizations*
- ✓ *Academic institutions*
- ✓ *Service Corps of Retired Executives (SCORE) which is comprised of retired business people*
- ✓ *RefugeNET(<http://www.refugenet.org>)*

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*The Friends of  
Mashpee NWR's  
motto is  
"Just do it!"*

---

## Core Group Checklist

Identify one or two people willing to start the process and take on a leadership role.	
Begin a preliminary assessment of achievable goals the group can accomplish to assist the refuge.	
Communicate with refuge staff to begin relationship building process.	
Make a decision as to whether a Friends group is needed or if it is the right time.	
Begin putting together a Board of Directors.	
Network with other Friends groups.	
Begin to attract and recruit members.	
Be willing to assess the group's viability, board structure and goals.	
Be willing to develop abilities, skills and knowledge through training sessions.	





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*Red-footed boobies, Kilauea Point NWR, Hawaii*

# Develop the Relationship

## Building a relationship between Friends and Refuge staff

**One key factor in the success of a Friends group is the relationship its members have with the refuge staff.**

Open and regular communication is critical to making these relationships work. Each group has a responsibility to understand each others' mission, responsibilities, talents, capabilities and shortcomings. The best partnership is where the parties tap into each other's strengths and use them to achieve a common goal.

One thing a Friends group can do to help build the relationship is to begin to understand how the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is structured, and therefore how the manager of your refuge gets things done.

Most refuges are headed by a Refuge Manager, who also has the administrative title of Project Leader. He or she oversees a staff of varying size and composition, depending on the refuge size and needs. (See the chart on the following page for an example of a "typical" refuge staff).

Your refuge manager answers to a chain of command within one of seven Regional Offices. Some refuge decisions may need to go through a complicated chain of command which may include U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service directors in Washington, DC. This bureaucracy can slow down the decision making process and can be very frustrating for the public. Talking with your Refuge Manager and people within the Regional and Washington offices can help you to understand how things work. Understanding how things work within the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will help Friends groups be better advocates in communicating the issues to the public. It will also help you to understand where the

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*"It takes time to nurture a working relationship. Be patient!"*

–Martin C. Kaehny, Refuge Manager, Eastern Neck NWR  
(Refuge Manager Survey, NWRA, 1997)

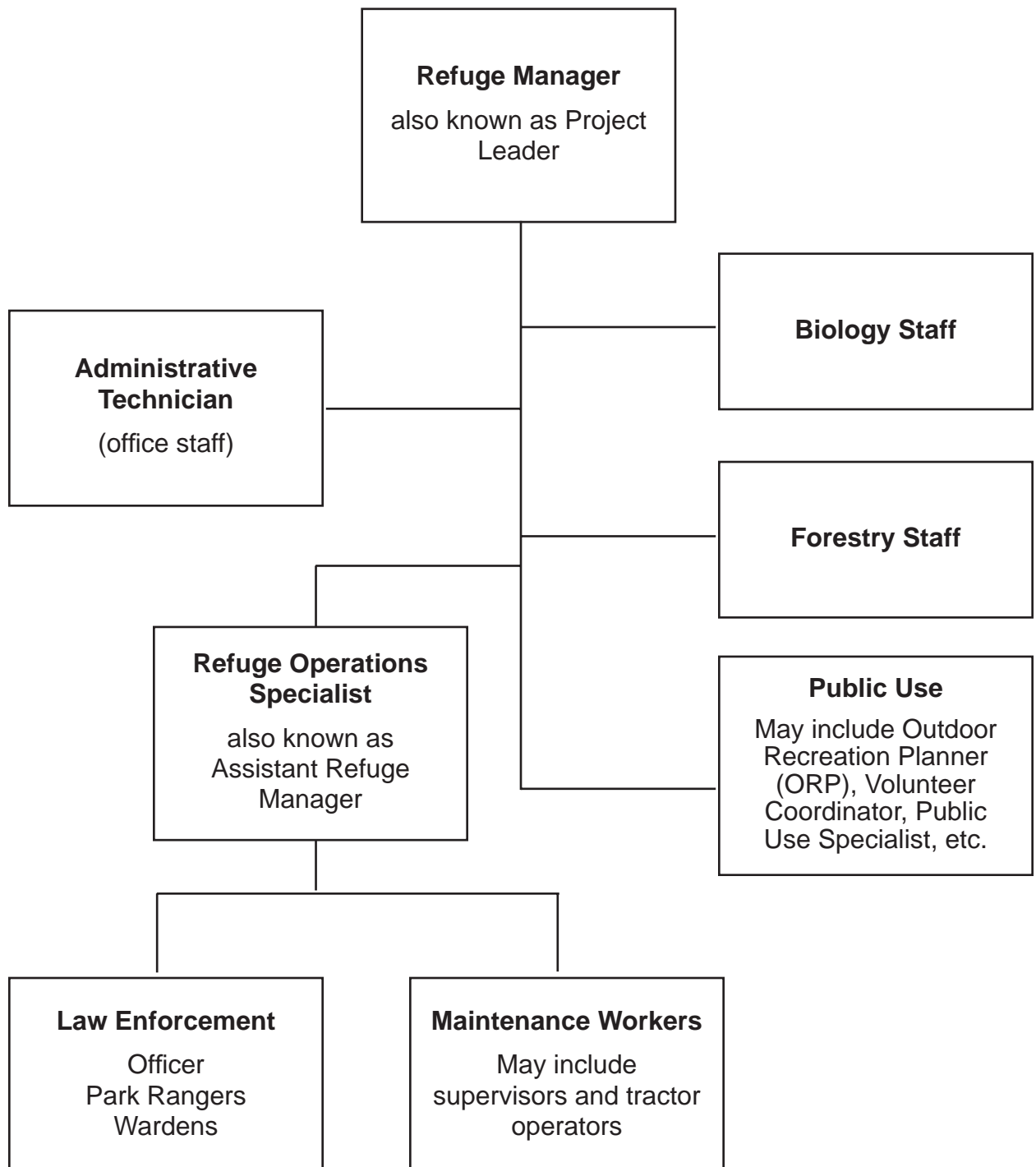
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### Keys to learning about your refuge

Groups that are the most effective get to know the system and its people. They:

- Learn how to cut through the red tape
- Understand the system
- Learn about their local regions.
- Develop relationships within their regions
- Identify who to talk to in order to get things done.

## Typical Wildlife Refuge Staff \*



\* The diagram shows typical job categories one might find on a refuge. Refuge's staff vary according to the needs and size of the particular site.

### Tools for learning about your refuge

- Talk about the hierarchy of the Fish and Wildlife Service with your refuge manager.

- Visit your Regional office – get a tour of all the departments. Meet the people that play a major role in management and decision making.

Use the tools each refuge offers:

- Annual Narrative Reports

- Comprehensive management plan or master plan, interpretive plans.

- Understand the focus of your local refuge and the issues that affect it.

- See the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service web page for a wealth of information about the FWS itself, its policies, programs and objectives (<http://www.fws.gov>).

### A great resource for information about the Refuge System:

*Refuge Reporter*  
James Clark, editor  
Avocet Two, publisher  
Millwood, VA 22646-0156  
Phone/Fax 540-837-2152  
Refrep@earthlink.net

*Continued from page 22*

barriers may be in achieving the goals at your refuge.

Another thing Friends and the refuge staff can do to build their relationship is to understand the expectations they hold for one another. Each group should ask the following question: What expectations do the Friends and the staff of the refuge hold for themselves and each other in the relationship? It is useful to do some consensus building exercises. You will develop a list of guiding principles which clearly communicate the expectations of the two groups.

This is an important exercise that you can and should do with the refuge staff at some point. It is important to realize that some tension is to be expected. It exists in every relationship. Ask yourselves, “What are the undercurrents?” These are the issues that are critical to get into the open and discuss.

Some have likened the Friends/refuge partnership to a marriage, where, in order to succeed, each party must continue to be flexible, respectful, understanding, supportive, positive, and open to discussion and possible change. Developing a strong, open and supportive relationship takes time and effort by both the refuge staff and the group’s members.

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*“Stick with it! Let even the small refuges know they can benefit!”*

–Forrest W. Cameron, Refuge Manager, Malheur NWR (Refuge Manager Survey, NWRA, 1997)

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## Tools for Success

- Remember that day-to-day management of the refuge belongs to the refuge staff.
- Refuge staff performance evaluations are also the responsibility of refuge staff.
- In the same way, the refuge manager does not “manage” the Friends group.
- Get agency support. This may include getting to know the right people in the regional office and the Washington office.
- Involve the FWS people, but do not be deterred if they are not supportive. Wait out the non-supportive staff.
- Don’t do something that the refuge does not support.
- Stay in sequence with the refuge. Don’t go too fast into a project. Note that often the refuge is slower to act. Sometimes the Friends group may need to push things along. When making decisions, keep maintaining a good relationship in mind and be sure to discuss plans with the Refuge manager.
- Don’t go over the Refuge manager’s head, without his/her knowledge. This does not imply having to get their permission!
- Don’t let a personal conflict persist (e.g., Friends member versus refuge manager/staff).
- Sometimes the Friends may be in conflict with what the FWS wants to do. It is important to discuss these differences with the refuge manager. It’s okay to disagree, but it will hurt the relationship to “air your dirty laundry” in public.

## A GOOD PARTNERSHIP IS . . .

- A true involvement of both parties.
- Everyone playing on the same team.
- Mutual respect for and understanding of each other’s mission.
- Open and regular communication between both parties.
- Refuge manager and the staff need to really want a friends group and give their time to support the partnership.

---

*“I think managers / staff need to develop a trust relationship with groups. The groups need to get to know you, have little successes with projects and ideas and then expand. It takes a significant amount of time and personal attention (face to face rather than letters) to build this relationship.”*

–Mick Erickson, Refuge Manager, Chase Lake NWR (NWR Refuge Managers Survey, 1997)

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*“Be prepared to share in management decisions and have a willingness to compromise.”*

–Daniel Doshier, Refuge Manager, Crab Orchard NWR. (Refuge Manager Survey, NWRA, 1997)

## How do we build the partnership?

Now that we have entered this relationship, how do we build a partnership?

Ask for a meeting with the refuge manager. Together you will make a preliminary identification of the kinds of things your group can do to assist the refuge. This begins the partnership building process.

Important topics to discuss with refuge manager:

### **Make a decision whether a Friends Group is needed or if it is the right time.**

- Coordinate efforts with the refuge manager and get his or her personal support.
- The refuge manager must give the Friends personal attention and time.
- The refuge manager should encourage the entire refuge staff and volunteers to support the friends.

### **Discuss partnership opportunities.**

- Exchange ideas on refuge needs and wants.
- Ask, “How can we help you?”
- Suggest ideas of how you can help. (Do your homework on what could be and needs to be done.)
- Review ideas how other established Friends Groups have helped other refuges.

### **Discuss roles**

- Define the Friends’ role - the specific areas in which they will provide “support” to that refuge.
- Clarify what activities the Friends do and do not want to get involved with.

- Clarify what the Refuge manager and staff do and do not get involved in with regard to the Friends group.
- Clarify the difference between the refuge volunteers and the Friends. They have different purposes, although memberships often overlap.
- Educate yourself and others about the dynamics of partnerships.

### **Discuss rules of communication**

- A philosophy of no surprises is a good idea.

### **Describe the long-term relationship with a formal agreement (Memorandum of Agreement or MOA).**

Note: While this step is recommended to help clarify the relationship, it is not required for a Friends group to organize and support a refuge. Indeed, there may be reasons why a refuge manager and the Friends group do not want to develop an MOA (e.g., when the Friends group is focused mainly on legislation and does not qualify for 501 (c) (3) non-profit.)

## Words of Wisdom From Other Friends Groups

“

A couple of years are needed to establish the full trusting and supportive relationship. Even if it starts up easily, you all need time to build the relationship.

~

A change in the refuge manager will require additional work to establish a new relationship. This may take time and require new strategies.

~

Changes in membership of the Friends group can also impact the situation.

~

Expect things to ebb and flow.

~

Friends and the manager need to be patient, enthusiastic, persevere, stress teamwork, and commit to the partnership.

~

Develop mutual respect for each other.

~

Make a distinction between operational matters versus opinions, issues, etc.

~

Remember that the process is dynamic and the relationship and issues will change over time.

”

---

*“Very positive experience  
– An excellent way for  
the refuge to get the  
public involved.”*

–Louis S. Hinds III,  
Refuge Manager,  
J.N. Ding Darling NWR  
(Refuge Managers Survey,  
NWRA, 1997)

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*“It’s a very rewarding  
and worthwhile experi-  
ence and the benefits  
outweigh the staff time  
needed to support their  
efforts.”*

–Burkett S. Neely, Jr.,  
Refuge Manager, Arthur R.  
Marshall Loxahatchee NWR  
(Refuge Manager Survey,  
NWRA, 1997)

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## Guiding principles for the Friends/U.S. Fish and Wildlife relationship

What follows is the list of expectations for the relationship between FWS and Friends groups developed at the culmination of the 1997 meeting in Virginia. It was signed by everyone present as a statement of principles:

We commit to abide by the following expectations that we hold for one another in the Friends-FWS relationship.

### **Expectations that the Friends hold for themselves in the relationship:**

- That we will consistently and regularly communicate honestly and strongly.
- That we will work to protect the natural resource.
- That we will respect the concerns that the USFWS has regarding the relationship, i.e., that we will have reasonable expectations of them and what they can do.
- That we will be committed to the refuge mission, which means that we must know what the mission is and so we will educate ourselves.
- That we will be fully committed to keeping up our end of the partnership.
- That we will not undercut agency and refuge management, that the “dirty linens” will not be aired in public.
- That we will buy into a shared vision, that means a vision that both sides work to create.
- That we will help the Service personnel to be and feel productive.

### **Expectations that the Friends hold for the FWS relationship:**

- “That they will put their money where their mouths are.” You talk the talk, can you walk the walk? Commit to training, to mentoring and to providing the resources that are needed. That the FWS will commit to doing what needs to be done to help make the Friends group effort succeed: it is not just the money.
- That they are making a long-term commitment to this effort, that the non-profit organizations are here to stay. That the commitment is consistent among refuge managers (both serially over time and at each refuge and across all refuges) and throughout the USFWS.
- That they will have a true sense of partnership, wherein there will be a “no surprises” philosophy and a full sharing of information in both directions.
- That the Friends efforts will have the support of the whole USFWS, and especially including the managers. The managers are critical but it needs to permeate the whole agency.
- That they will trust and respect us.
- That they will work to protect the natural resource.

*Continued on page 29*

*Continued from page 28*

**Expectations that the FWS hold for themselves in the relationship:**

- View the Friends groups as a long-term, personal friendship. This implies dealing with them honestly, trusting and respecting them, appreciating them, being patient with them, not being negative about them, and using the full set of talents.
- We will work to sell it to our peers and to the troops. We will work to infuse support for Friends throughout the agency.
- Providing consistent follow-through and active support of Friends groups from the Washington office, the regional offices, and the field.
- We understand what it takes to have a Friends group and then make the commitment.
- That we will help you help us. We will teach you about the government systems to make your job easier. We will give you the information that you need to do your job and to give you the information before you read it in the media.
- That we will help the Friends to be and feel productive.

**Expectations that the FWS hold for the Friends in the relationship:**

- To protect the resource.
- To be independent advocates. That they will learn how to influence governmental systems. That they will be advocates for the good of the system at the local and national level. That they might help to raise funds to benefit the refugees.
- That they will respect and trust the Service employees.
- That they will understand and respect the operational pressures and boundaries that affect the Service (Give the Service the room they need to make management decisions.)
- To provide a positive community influence. Be our doorway to the public.
- To assist in accomplishing refuge projects. The Service's resources are limited and sometimes we need you to help us to finish a project.



## Relationship Building Checklist

Meet with the refuge staff to clarify the roles of the Friends group and the Refuge in the relationship.	
Gain the personal support of the Refuge manager.	
Learn all you can about the Refuge. Do your homework.	
Ask Refuge staff, "How can we help you?" Bring some ideas of your own.	
Establish clear rules of open and regular communication. No surprises.	
Give the relationship time to grow.	







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*Saguaro cactus, Kofa NWR, Arizona*

# Mission and Vision

## Mission, goals and objectives

Establishing your organization requires that you think through what the purpose of your group will be: What is its mission and how will you translate that mission into action? Your mission statement will define your group. Once you have a mission, you'll develop a list of goals and objectives to help you achieve your mission.

The mission statement says who you are. It gives your group its identity. It is a single consistent statement that communicates to the public and members what your group represents – why it exists, what greater goals it hopes to accomplish. It also guides decision making, since each project your group works on should help to achieve its mission.

Understanding what you can do to help the refuge will help your group decide on a mission and a vision. Spend plenty of time talking with the refuge manager and staff to decide on a general role for your group. Once your

group has decided what it can do for the refuge, you will be ready to develop the group's mission and vision.

Often it takes time, perhaps many meetings to develop your mission statement. Don't get hung up on the language or exact wording. Good leadership can prevent this from happening. There is no one format your statement must take. Your goal is to come up with consensus from the group for a statement that best describes your purpose.

The process of forming a mission statement is almost as important as having one. Through this process, your group will form a commitment to the organization. Your group gets a chance to openly express and discuss their visions and concerns for the future of the organization.

*Continued on page 35*

### sample mission statements

*For the public good, preserve and enhance the integrity of the National Wildlife Refuge System as the nation's most important network of diverse and strategically located habitats set aside primarily for the benefit of fish, wildlife, and plants.*

National Wildlife Refuge Association

*The Ding Darling Wildlife Society will promote a better understanding and appreciation of the natural environment of south-west Florida, and, in particular, the J.N. Ding Darling NWR.*

Ding Darling Wildlife Society,  
Sanibel, FL,  
J.N. Ding Darling NWR

*Instill reverence, respect and sense of value for our wild creatures and habitats. -Facilitate education of others in the ways of the wilds. - Interpret the sensations of nature ... so others can marvel in her magnificence while learning to respect her fragility. Ours is a mission of service most humble yet of the highest order.*

Tensas River Refuge Association, Winnsboro, LA,  
Tensas River NWR

*Continued from page 34*

A group's mission is dynamic, not static. Friends groups are dynamic organizations. While it is important to develop a mission and vision that works well today, the needs of the group and /or the refuge may change. As you develop, your group may find it wants to accomplish things that were not part of the original vision. Remember, the mission is not set in stone. It can and should be revisited and revised as needed. Try not to get "bogged down" in philosophical discussions that take energy away from the group. At some point, everyone needs to agree on the group's mission and move on. The mission can be revisited at some point to make sure it works for the group.

### **A Mission Statement Is . . .**

- Based on an understanding of the mission of the local refuge.
- Based on an understanding of the purpose and mission of Refuge System (and the FWS).
- A shared vision defined together, with citizens and refuge manager.
- Designed around a list of goals identifying several that can be accomplished first.
- Simply stated, clear and able to inspire people to action.

## sample mission statements

*To add to the Refuge all wetlands remaining on the Bay, to protect each from degradation until it can be acquired, and to lobby for funds for purchase.*

Citizens to Complete the Refuge, Palo Alto, CA  
Don Edwards San Francisco Bay NWR, San Francisco Bay NWR Complex

*To support environmental educational, recreational activities and programs; to increase public understanding of the history and environment of Bombay Hook and Prime Hook Refuges, the Allee House, and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.*

Friends Of Bombay Hook, Smyrna, DE, Bombay Hook & Prime Hook Refuges

*Promote better understanding and appreciation of the natural history and natural environment of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, and in particular, the Seney NWR.*

Seney Natural History Association, Seney, MI, Seney NWR

### Tools to help your group build a mission

- Pull together a meeting of Friends and Refuge staff to brainstorm about the vision and mission.
- Consider all ideas during the “visioning” and brainstorming.
- Be realistic, but be visionary.
- Have the refuge manager conduct a tour and introduction session to the specific refuge and the FWS.
- Identify someone in the community with training in vision writing to facilitate a meeting.
- Get copies of other Friends groups’ mission statements.
- Understand that your mission may change over time, be prepared to rework it as needed.
- Don’t be overly concerned whether you call your document a mission statement, a vision or a purpose.

### sample mission statements

*The purpose of the Merritt Island Wildlife Assoc. is to promote conservation, awareness, and appreciation of the Merritt Island NWR and to provide assistance to Refuge programs.*

Merritt Island Wildlife Association, Titusville, FL, Merritt Island NWR

*The Friends of Seal Beach NWR are committed to community stewardship of the Seal Beach NWR through preservation, restoration, and education.*

Friends of Seal Beach NWR, Seal Beach, CA, Seal Beach NWR

*The purchase and protection of salt marsh estuarine systems and their adjacent upland areas and watersheds from Kittery to Cape Elizabeth, ME.*

Friends of Rachel Carson NWR, Wells, ME, Rachel Carson NWR

## Goals vs. Objectives

The mission statement – a short statement of a group’s purpose – doesn’t tell the whole story about what your group is doing. How is your group going to accomplish its mission?

Once your group creates its mission, you’ll want to translate it into action. This is done by setting goals and objectives. These will define how you will go about doing your organization’s business. Your group will use its mission, goals and objectives in many ways – for nonprofit filing, membership development, program decisions and fundraising. Be realistic, but be visionary. Plan to revisit your goals and objectives annually.

**Goals** are general statements about what you want to accomplish and objectives are specific statements about how you plan to do it. Goals are also called strategies or strategic initiatives. Examples of goal statements might be: “to educate the public about the refuge”; or “to raise money for the refuge”; or “to increase membership”; or “to increase public outreach in various media.”

**Objectives** are specific, measurable, verifiable activities your group will do to carry out your strategy. To educate the public, you might decide to build a new display in the refuge’s visitor center, organize nature walks to teach people about wildlife and the refuge’s role in preserving it, or go into the schools with a specific curriculum.

To raise money, your group might sponsor annual festivals, road races or other events and seek a specific sum of money to be raised.

Outreach may include publishing ten articles in the local newspaper, and may require getting acquainted with the editorial staffs of all local publications; the group might also decide to publish a brochure.

### Excerpt from Friends of Minnesota Valley NWR’s strategic plan, 1994-1995\*

#### ■ Goals:

*Conserve the integrity of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge.*

*Provide education to residents of communities adjacent to the Valley towards wildlife conservation goals.*

*Provide wildlife conservation and environmental education to governmental agencies concerned with the Valley.*

*Work to complete land acquisition in the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge.*

*Provide advocacy for the Refuge as needed.*

Committees were formed to meet these goals. They developed objectives and a plan of action. A sampling from the outreach committee plan follows:

#### ■ Objective:

*Expand membership to 300 by December, 1995*

##### **Action Items:**

- *Contact members who do not renew their memberships.*
- *Increase number and variety of Friends member events to at least four per year.*

#### ■ Objective:

*Begin a program of outreach to community groups.*

##### **Action items:**

- *Develop a Friends presentation and present to the Board for input in February, 1995.*
- *Conduct 6 presentations to city councils, committees, and local business leaders by December, 1995.*

\* see appendix for entire strategic plan



## Mission and Vision Checklist

You may consider getting a facilitator to help with the mission statement and goal setting process.	
Both Friends and Refuge staff are involved in creating a mission that is clear and simply stated and will inspire people to action.	
Be bold in your vision, but be realistic too.	
The mission is be based on an understanding of the Refuge mission.	
The mission serves as a focus for the group and will help to identify which projects to undertake.	
Translate the mission into action by setting goals and objectives to carry it out.	
Be willing to periodically re-evaluate your mission, goals and objectives.	







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*Snow geese, DeSoto NWR, Iowa*

# Building the Organization

*“People who get involved with public causes open themselves to frustration and disappointment, but – through it all and after it all – those moments of making change happen for the better are among our lasting joys. There’s something wonderfully rewarding in being part of an effort that makes a difference and there’s something rewarding too, in being among other people when they’re at their best.”*

Brian O’Connell,  
The Board Member’s Book

## Building the organization

Now you have a core leadership and a mission statement. Maybe you also have a few projects that your group has agreed to do with the refuge. What’s next? How do you move from being a group of dedicated volunteers to being an organization with membership, money and recognition?

There are a number of steps, and a few legal hoops, your group must go through to formally establish your organization. Some of the questions you may want to consider include:

- Do you want a voting membership or just contributors?
- Do you want to raise funds, and for what?
- What type of activities will your group be involved in?
- Do you want to be a non-profit organization that can receive tax-deductible contributions, and what are the options?
- How many board members do you need and what skills should they bring to the group?
- What do you expect from the board members?
- Do you need formal committees?

Some answers to these questions will come naturally from your mission and goals statement, others will be more difficult to answer.

No two Friends groups are exactly alike – some are more formal than others, some focus on outreach, others focus on projects or fundraising. Some have voting members and others have only contributors.

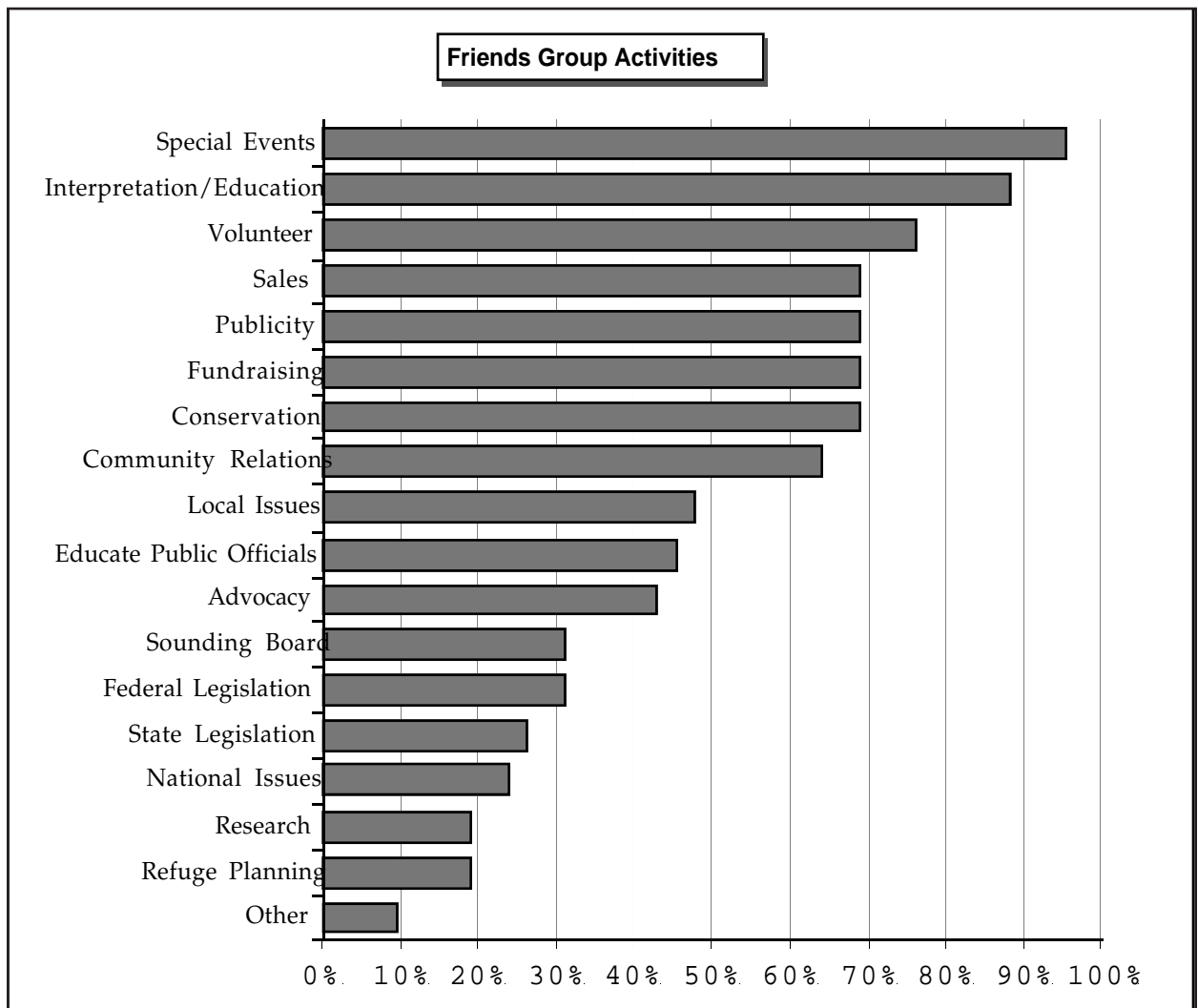
Friends groups report being involved in a wide variety of activities.\* (See chart opposite)

### Steps to formalize your organization

- Determine the purpose of the organization
- Form a board of directors
- Draft bylaws
- File articles of incorporation
- File for an Internal Revenue Service determination of federal tax exempt status
- Meet the requirements of state, county, and municipal charitable solicitation laws

Making decisions about what your organization will look like and how it will function takes time – maybe as much as six months to a year. While the process may feel terribly slow, these are important decisions that will dictate how your organization will function for years to come. There really is no reason to rush.

It’s also important to move forward and not allow yourself to get bogged down with difficult issues. Some disagreement is inevitable, and sometimes it may be best to “agree to disagree” and move on. You can always agree to change things later if some part of your organization isn’t working the way you want it to. In fact, it is important as a group to regularly (annually) review your mission statement, goals and accomplishments to be sure you are on track. Any needed changes can be made at that time.



\* National Wildlife Refuge Association Friends Survey, 1997.

### Three different kinds of Friends Groups

**1. Friends of Back Bay** decided to form a 501 (c) (4) organization. Their mission is focused on land acquisition: lobbying is a main activity, thus they have no formal agreement with the Fish and Wildlife Service, but excellent people-to-people communications.

**2. Friends of Minnesota Valley** is a 501 (c) (3) organization. Their mission is to conserve and protect the natural and cultural resources of the Minnesota River Valley. Their activities are a mix of supporting the refuge, establishment and development, education of the public, fund raising to support these activities, all the while helping to “educate” congressional leaders about the Valley’s resources and needs. They have formal agreements with the Fish and Wildlife Service on a project specific basis.

**3. Seney Natural History Association** has 501 (c) (3) status. Operating a sales outlet is their main activity. They have a cooperating association sales agreement with the Fish and Wildlife Service. They successfully operate a \$80,000+ sales facility. Proceeds go directly into support of refuge educational and interpretive activities.

### Tools to build the organization

- Develop an annual and long term strategic plan
- Develop a budget and resource development plan
- Establish Committees
- Establish a record keeping system for the organization’s official records
- Establish an accounting system
- Choose a logo, use it on your stationery
- Develop a brochure
- Print some stationery
- Create a Public Relations plan

## The Board

Members of the Board of Directors of a Friends group will be the key people who develop policy and make decisions about how the organization's mission will be translated into action. An effective Board of Directors is critical to the success of the organization. The core group will need to reach out to the community to build the board. What follows are some tips on how to put together an effective board.

### ***Consider people's strengths and use those strengths on your board.***

As you build your board, consider the skills needed to make the organization work. For example, a lawyer and/or tax accountant to help with the non-profit filing, a banker to help with financial aspects, etc. The initial board will be composed of both "worker bees" and leaders. In time, you will have members who will pay dues and volunteer on the refuge.

### ***Look for people willing to:***

- Commit time and energy to the organization.
- Put the interests of the organization first.
- Prepare for and attend meetings.
- Ask questions, listen and think creatively.
- Take responsibility, follow through on assignments.
- Contribute personal and financial resources in a generous way according to circumstances.
- Open doors in the community.
- Evaluate themselves.
- Work well with people individually and in a group.
- Cultivate and solicit funds.
- Cultivate and recruit board members and volunteers.
- Read and understand financial statements.
- Learn more about the organization.
- Be honest, sensitive to and tolerate differing views.
- Have a friendly, responsive, and patient approach.
- Possess community-building and leadership skills.

*“When I look at what makes a board tick, it's often the ability to work together that counts, and this depends on qualities that lend themselves to team work.”*

Brian O'Connell,  
The Board Member's Book

### **Organizing tools:**

- Do not make the board too large or too small. A size of 9 to 15 or fewer is preferable.
- Match skills with needs.
- Prepare a written job description for individual board members.
- Ask each board member to serve on at least one board committee. For new members, one committee assignment is enough.

**Responsibilities of the Board of Directors:**

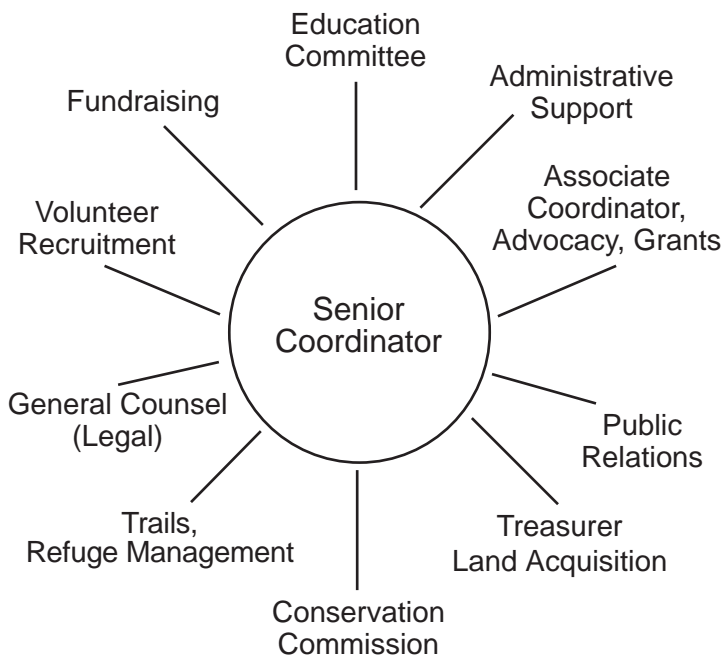
- Clarify the institution’s mission
- Approve long range plans
- Oversee the educational programs
- Insure financial solvency
- Preserve institutional independence
- Enhance the group’s public image
- Interpret the organization to the community
- Serve as a court of appeal
- Assess board performance

– Brian O’Connell,  
*The Board Member’s Book*

Here is an example of how one Friends group formed its Board of Directors:

Friends of Mashpee on Cape Cod in Massachusetts was formed to acquire lands to create the refuge. Their message to the public is: “The Refuge is Good for You.”

A non-hierarchical board was gathered from a list of people who served on various organizations in the community to bring the organization leverage:



Each spoke represents a needed skill, which helped the group identify people they wanted on the board. Each board member holds an identified responsibility and sometimes heads a volunteer committee to accomplish the job. On one hand, they sought people who could help them accomplish their goals. On the other, they also brought in people who showed lots of interest. For example, one fellow kept showing up at board meetings. “Who is this guy?” the core members asked. They found out he had lots to offer and lots of connections with important players in the community.

Mashpee’s senior coordinator David Palmer says he keeps a broom by his desk to remind him what his job is: “. . . to sweep the stuff out of the other board members paths – to help them accomplish their jobs.”

## Committees

The goal of your group is to get something done. You'll want to translate your mission into tangible action. One good way to do this is to set up a number of committees, each with a specific focus.

The job of committee members is to carry out the objectives set forth by the Board of Directors. Because committees are small (made up of one or more people) and focused (generally one project or issue), they can get a lot of work done that can't be done at the larger Board meetings. It is through your committees that the "real" work of your organization will be accomplished.

To encourage smooth functioning committees, we suggest that you:

- Keep it simple and the numbers small. Consider using ad hoc committees when practical, disbanding them when their objectives are completed.
- Prepare written statements of committee responsibilities, guidelines and goals. Plan on reviewing these statements every one to two years for the long standing committees.
- Make committee work assignments according to the background, expertise, and schedule of each member.
- Distribute tasks among members so that everyone participates but no one is overloaded.
- Create a system of checks and balances to monitor committee members' work and assure that tasks are completed on schedule.
- Assign an appropriate board member to work with each committee.

*As a board grows in size, here are some of the committees the group might form in addition to the Executive Committee, the board officers and the committee chair:*

### ■ Nominating Committee

*To identify and recruit new board members.*

### ■ Budget Committee

*People with financial experience to take care of the financial management of the group.*

### ■ Fundraising Committee

*To take on the fund-raising role.*

### ■ Strategic Planning

*Carries out the task of realistic planning, reviewing the group's mission regularly. One good strategy for planning is to hold a facilitated annual planning retreat to develop the agenda for the coming year.*

### ■ Membership Committee

*Seeks new members. Sets dues. Prepares and updates a membership brochure or flyer.*

*Friends report having other committees for:*

*specific annual events and functions; outreach; education; land acquisition; newsletter; board development and evaluation; refuge conservation; etc.*

## The Stages of Board Development:

All Friends groups are dynamic organizations. Understanding what type of group you want to be and deciding how to get there will help your group succeed in the long run. You must expect your group to change as it grows and matures. The following observations note three stages of progression in the life of nonprofit boards as described in Karl Mathiasen's book, *Board Passages: Three Key Stages in a Nonprofit Board's Life Cycle*.

1. An Organizing Board of Volunteers – a small, homogenous group of committed volunteers who form a board to work on a mutually agreed project. This board tends to be rather informal in its operational style.
2. A Volunteer Governing Board – as the organization grows, the board's focus ultimately shifts away from performing the day-to-day operational tasks. This board is more diversified and concentrates much of its work in committees and task forces; less work is done by the board acting as a committee of the whole. This board takes a larger role in planning and executing the organization's work, overseeing its finances and accounting for the organization's integrity.
3. Institutional or Fund Raising Board – this board tends to be very large and includes more people who have the capacity to give or have access to funders. This board becomes more prestigious and accepts the role of fundraising. Governance of the organization is delegated to an executive or management committee.

Many Refuge Friends groups are in the first or second stage. Many groups never reach the third stage, preferring to stay in the smaller, less formalized volunteer board stage. What's important is to understand where your group is, where you want to be, and to regularly evaluate your progress. Reevaluation is the key to a group's successful growth, and how it weathers change.



## The legal stuff

*Note: The following is intended to provide general guidance and information. It is not intended to be used as legal advice regarding the tax consequences of action by your group. If possible, seek the advice of a qualified attorney during this process.*

### State rules vary

Each state has its own rules for incorporation and nonprofits. It's critical that your group understands and follows these rules. Consult with your state Department of Revenue or your state Attorney General's office.

### Incorporation

After your group has formulated the mission and bylaws and completed the board development, it should then consider whether or not to incorporate. Incorporation allows the normal debts of an organization to be confined to the organization and generally does not put the personal assets of an individual at risk. While incorporation provides some protection, the board of directors is still liable for the conduct and management of the organization under state and federal law. Whether or not to incorporate may also be dictated by

*Continued on page 50*

*Use this "map" of tax status options. Follow it to help you determine what tax status your group will file.*

	<b>Individuals</b>	<b>Corporation</b>
Liability .....	Joint	Limited
Governed by....	Individuals	Board, bylaws and officers
Tax exemption.	Not possible	Possible
	<b>Non-tax-exempt</b>	<b>Tax exempt</b>
Income.....	Taxed	Not taxed
Donations .....	Not deductible	May be deductible
Activities .....	Not limited by tax law	Limited by tax law
Bulk mail.....	Commercial rate	Charitable rate
	<b>501(c)(4)</b>	<b>501(c)(3)</b>
Lobbying.....	Not limited	Limited
Electioneering..	Not allowed	Not allowed
Income.....	Not taxed	Not taxed
Donations .....	Not deductible	Deductible
	<b>Private Operating Foundation</b>	<b>Publicly Supported</b>
Support.....	From fewer donors	From more donors
Donations .....	Less deductible	More deductible

Source: *Starting Up: A Handbook for New River and Watershed Organizations*

## **Filing for non-profit status**

### **Pros of 501 (c) (3) . .**

- *Able to receive private tax-deductible gifts and donations*
- *Nonprofit status gives group credibility*
- *Able to receive funds from the government including the FWS and other organizations \**
- *Some private foundations only fund 501(c)(3) organizations*

### **Cons of 501 (c) (3) . . .**

- *Accountable to follow state laws managing the organization*
- *Ability to lobby is severely restricted*
- *Cannot campaign for or fund political candidates*
- *Annual paperwork involves time and commitment*

*\*In 1998, the Fish and Wildlife Service will distribute more than \$100,000 in grants for Friends, and you must be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit to be eligible.*

*Continued from page 49*

your state's laws governing nonprofit organizations. Making the decision to incorporate will likely be made at the same time you are making the decision whether or not to file for nonprofit status.

### **To be or not to be a nonprofit organization?**

Filing for nonprofit status is not that difficult, however having a lawyer will help you understand the legal jargon and get through the language of the forms. Most Friends groups choose to do it. Whether or not to file is an extremely important decision your group must make.

Under IRS codes, there are many different categories for non-profit groups. Most Friends groups choose to file under 501 (c) (3) — the charitable organizations section of the IRS code.

The benefits of a 501 (c) (3) is that it legally exempts your group from paying taxes on its income, and allows a tax deduction to contributors. Some funding agencies, including the federal government and many foundations and corporations will make donations and grants only to organizations with 501 (c) (3) status. Groups that want to operate a sales outlet on a refuge must also gain non-profit status. If the option is available, your group can operate under the umbrella of another group that has 501 (c) (3) status.

The drawback of 501 (c) (3) is it legally limits some actions. A 501 (c) (3) status allows very little lobbying. If you do any lobbying at all under 501 (c) (3) status, you must track it carefully. The general rule is that up to 5% of your group's activity may be spent on lobbying. Between 6-19% is a gray area. Anything more than 20% could jeopardize your group's 501 (c) (3) status. The broad definition of lobbying is: "any attempt to influence any legislation through an attempt to affect the opinions of the general public or any segment thereof," (known as "grass roots" lobbying) or "any attempt to influence any legislation through communication with any member

*Continued on page 51*

*Continued from page 50*

or employee of a legislative body, or with any governmental official or employee who may participate in the formulation of the legislation.”

In addition, under the 501 (c) (3) status your group may not fund or endorse a candidate for election.

However, you can meet with your legislators to educate or inform them about refuge issues without it being considered lobbying. Educating legislators would include, writing/visiting/calling to provide them with information about the refuge, and refuge programs; their benefit to the community; who you are; and what your group is trying to do. These activities can be considered relationship building, not lobbying.

If your group is founded specifically to lobby, it can file under 501 (c) (4) - the social welfare section of the IRS code. Lobbying is allowed under 501 (c) (4) status, but is still restricted. This status makes the organization tax exempt, but does not allow tax deductions to contributors. You can lobby, for example, to influence your legislator's vote on specific bills and on such matters as refuge funding, policies on land acquisition, or resources that effect either your local refuge or the National Wildlife Refuge System in general.

### **Getting through the Paperwork**

The primary purpose of a non-profit is to be a charitable organization. If you've decided nonprofit is the way to go with your group, you must file for tax-exempt status. Call the IRS and send for the forms. Then, our best advice to you is to get a lawyer to guide you through the process.

The most important way your group can prepare to file is to have a clear idea of your group's purpose with a mission statement. From that mission comes the group's operating document, goals and objectives.

This information is needed when filling out the forms. If your goal is 501 (c) (3) nonprofit status, the primary purpose of your group cannot be lobbying or your application will be denied.

### ■ Finding a lawyer

Call the State Bar Association

Speak with other nonprofits (who do they use?)

Ask members of your group

Contact your local nonprofit management institute or the National Center for Nonprofit Boards for leads

Ask your FWS regional office legal department for leads

### ■ Getting the forms

#### **Federal:**

Call the IRS at 1-800-829-3676 and ask for the following forms:

Publication 557 – “Tax Exempt Status for Your Organization” information booklet

Form 1023 – to file 501 (c) (3) status

Form 1024 – to file 501 (c) (4) status

Form 8178 – “User Fee for Exempt Organization Determination Letter Request”

Form SS-4 – “Application for Employer Identification Number”

Form 872-C – “Consent Fixing Period of Limitation Upon Assessment of Tax Under Section 4940 of the Internal Revenue Code”

#### **State:**

Contact your state's Corporations Division, Secretary of State's Office, to find out what your state's laws are.

## Cooperating Association Resources

- ✓ *Talk to other Cooperating Associations to discuss products, accounting, management, etc.*
- ✓ *Some Cooperating Associations provide loans for start-up.*
- ✓ *Loans may be available from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Call: (202) 857-0166 for information.*

## To be or not to be a Cooperating Association

Many refuge Friends groups also have a cooperating agreement with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that allows them to sell items of educational or interpretive value like books and posters on the refuge. The Cooperating Association Agreement is a legal document between the Friends group and the FWS that defines the responsibilities of the Friends group and the FWS in the sales outlet partnership. Only groups who file for non-profit status with the IRS will be allowed to set up a sales outlet on a refuge.

The major benefit to having a cooperating agreement is that having a sales outlet provides a steady source of income. The Friends can then use the profits for projects that will benefit the refuge.

Having a sales outlet also requires your group to manage a business, which includes careful book-keeping, keeping goods in stock, and training and managing staff and or volunteers to run it.

### Reasons to become a Cooperating Association . . .

- *Steady source of income – these funds will enable your group to provide many resources to the refuge that may otherwise not be possible.*
- *Builds visibility through sales of refuge and Friends specific items.*
- *Builds membership and volunteers through a visible presence on the refuge.*

### . . . or not

- *Lack of space at a visitor center, kiosk or other structure for sales space.*
- *Doesn't fit with your group's mission or objectives.*
- *Your group doesn't meet non-profit status requirement.*
- *Competes with current volunteer time, resources or both.*
- *Your group is not ready to take on the management of a business.*

## What you need to start a Cooperating Association

Business manager (volunteer or hired) or Bookstore Committee

Volunteers

Start-up money to purchase initial stock

Cooperative agreement with Fish and Wildlife Service

501(c)(3) Non-profit status

Sales space

### Important note

The FWS has written guidelines for Cooperating Associations. Standard agreements are also available.

To learn more, contact:  
Tina Dobrinsky  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,  
Division of Refuges  
4401 N. Fairfax Drive,  
Room 670  
Arlington, VA 22203  
Phone: (703) 358-1744



## Board Membership Checklist

Decide first what skills you need, and then seek out people who have them.	
Prepare written job descriptions for board members.	
Ask each board member to serve on at least one committee.	
Each member must understand the responsibilities of the board of directors.	
Understand what stage your board is in, and be willing to regularly evaluate your progress. Be willing to grow and change.	
Decide which committees your group will have, and how they will conduct their business.	
Put together a Board Manual with all pertinent information about the group. Update it regularly (see appendix).	





## Organization Checklist

What is your group's focus and what types of activities will you engage in? This will determine the structure of the organization.	
Formalize your organization with a board of directors, committees, bylaws, and articles of incorporation.	
Decide whether to file for 501 (c) (3), or 501 (c) (4) tax-exempt status.	
Decide if it is appropriate for your group to become a Cooperating Association with a sales outlet on the Refuge.	
Begin the planning process. Start with an annual plan. Later think about a long-term strategic plan and public relations plan.	
Establish a record keeping system.	
Establish a bookkeeping system.	
Create a logo and a brochure.	
Print letterhead.	





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*Karner Blue butterfly, Necedah NWR, Wisconsin*

# Planning

## On planning

As you begin, your group will likely start with a short-term action plan – focus on a few small achievable goals. This will allow growth, development of ideas, and give those ideas some time to evolve. While you'll have visions of accomplishing great things, you'll have to make hard decisions about where to focus your energies. This is where planning comes in.

Planning is a process which is too important to be left to chance. Most successful groups spend time wisely in their planning. If you can afford to, it will help your group immeasurably to hire a consultant to facilitate this process.

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*“Involve the full board in deciding attainable goals and the best methods for achieving them. The basic rule is to involve the group in identifying attainable goals and agreeing to stick to them tenaciously.”*

– Brian O’Connell,  
The Board Member’s Book

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## Plan to succeed

- *Develop short-term and long-term goals. Balance both thinking big and being realistic*
- *Take on projects that force the group to stretch themselves to be successful*
- *Decide what type of activities to pursue. Should it be education, visitors’ facilities, habitat protection, or something else?*
- *Look for new ways to do old business. Be creative.*
- *Become aware of obstacles. Develop plans to overcome them.*
- *Early on, focus on the natural resource, not on the politics.*
- *Ask why. Ask why not...*

In planning it is useful to think about potential products you will end up with. The following list was adapted from *A Nonprofit Organization Operating Manual* by Arnold J. and Philip R. Olenick.)

■ **Mission statement** – who and what you are.

■ **Vision statement** – what “business” you are in, what you plan to do, and what kind of organization you will need to do it.

■ **Strategic plan** – what you will accomplish in 3-5 years.

■ **Annual plan** – what you will accomplish this year.

■ **Human Resource plan** – how you will organize your volunteers.

■ **Logistics** – What you need, where and when and what resources to carry out plans.

■ **Funds and other donated resources** – What you need to pay for human resources, and to pay for logistical needs.

■ **Sources and types of funding** – fees, grants, endowments, in-kind contributions, borrowing, etc.

■ **Work plans** – projects and other tasks planned for the coming year with timelines.

■ **Organizational issues** – board, staff, and volunteer roles and relationships beyond provisions of the bylaws.

■ **Marketing and public relations** – getting your message across to the public, funding sources, writing grants, fundraising, marketing and public relations.

### ***Set short-term and long-term goals, and deadlines***

- Do a needs assessment*  
*Brainstorm ideas.*
- Establish priorities and order them*
- Define roles and responsibilities of group members*
- Do a reality check*  
*What is possible to accomplish given your resources?*  
*Set goals that are achievable given your resources.*
- Develop programs and goals in line with your mission and with the missions of the refuge and refuge system.*

## Tools for Planning

In your first year, you are going to want to say that you've accomplished something. What will that something be? In the beginning, it may be possible to only accomplish three to five new things each year.

Methods to identify planning tactics or objectives:

- List actions needed to achieve the goal; staff, concept plan, maps, funds, media.
- Match people with the tasks, define roles and responsibilities.
- Do a needs assessment.
- Establish priorities.
- Do a reality check.
- Plan your five W's for implementation, ask: who, what, when, where, and why.

Tips for achieving agreement, concurrence or buy-in for your plans:

- Meet with membership, management, and staff.
- Write a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Friends and Refuge.
- Build support with facts and attention to details.
- Be prepared to defend and to sell your plan.
- Think through who the opposition is and what they may say. Know your supporters and opponents.

Define responsibilities to achieve each task – match people with tasks.

- Ask for volunteers.
- Determine whether paid employees would be best for certain duties.
- Use other groups. Engage other organizations.
- Again make use of the five W's.

Establish deadlines and procedures for follow-up.

- Make deadlines realistic and be flexible to accommodate constraints and unforeseen circumstances.
- Check in on progress often.
- If no deadlines are set, then it never gets done.

Document what you did.

- Keep a written history or chronicle of each project to learn from what was done.

Revisit your plan every year.

- Planning is a process, not an event.
- Schedule a time to do planning (at least every year).

Evaluate the outcomes of the project and consider what went well and ways to improve.

## Words of Wisdom From Other Friends Groups

“

Dare to dream big dreams.

~

Plan for small successes and celebrate them.

~

Don't expect immediate results.

~

Respect each volunteer's time.

~

Look for big successes over time.

~

It is not easy. There will be ups and downs and you may have short-term failures. **DO NOT GIVE UP!**

~

Always say “Please” and “Thank you.”

The devil is in the details.

~

Remember that it is 5% inspiration and 95% perspiration.

~

Don't sweat the small stuff.

~

Get out and enjoy the refuge!

”





# Planning Checklist

Planning is too important to leave to chance. If possible, get a facilitator to help you with this process.	
Involve the entire board in planning to achieve buy-in.	
Brainstorm ideas for both short term and long term goals. Order these and establish priorities.	
Don't try to do it all at once. Begin by accomplishing what you can in the short term, while thinking ahead to the future.	
Keep your mission in mind in all stages of planning.	
Analyze, document what you did to help with future planning.	
Revisit your plans regularly. Be willing to adapt or change them.	
Establish responsibilities to achieve each task, with deadlines and procedures for follow-up on all projects.	
Remember, your focus is the resource.	





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*Migrating shorebirds, Grays Harbor NWR, Washington*

# Membership

## Building membership

Once you have your mission statement and begin working on your activities, you'll want to begin building your general membership. Here are some suggestions for doing this.

Seek diversity in your membership. Diversity creates new opportunities and a rich mix of talents and skills and interests for your group. Consider who you have not invited to join you. A great place to start is with the users of the refuge.

People volunteer because they care. It is as simple as that. Recent surveys show that 51 percent of Americans volunteer an average of at least five hours a week. The Friends Group Survey shows the average Friends board member give about four hours of their time each month.

### Suggestions for keeping members

**Follow-up** – Analyze who your members are and include this information in the database. Do selective mailings to target sectors of members that have particular interests.

**Benefits** – Offer additional benefits to members who contribute more money (e.g., discounts at the bookstore and life members receive a guided tour of the refuge as recognition).

**Personalized welcome** – Welcome new members with a personal letter. Also use a personal letter as a reminder to renew. Welcome new members in the newsletters or with a picnic, etc.

**Privileges and benefits** – Provide special privileges and benefits for members. Let them be the first to tour new trails, etc.

**Recognition** – Hold volunteer recognition dinners.

---

*“You never know when you’re going to need a friend, so we have lots of them.”*

– David Palmer, Friends of Mashpee

---

### Tools for Success

- Develop a computerized membership data base. Make sure it is a flexible program.

- Find a computer expert to help you. Make sure everyone can use the program.

- Develop a list and actively recruit members.

- In the beginning, each board member could be

responsible to contact ten people.

- Find names from such sources as:

- Tax rolls for ownership of land.

- Local environmental groups, e.g., Audubon chapter.

- Visitor registers from the refuge.

- Encourage refuge staff to acquire names and to add addresses to their database.

- Re-structure the refuge visitor register to get addresses and phone numbers.

- Use the newsletter to solicit members.

- Distribute membership information during speeches.

## Group Dynamics

Understanding and being aware of group dynamics is important to getting and keeping members. Members must be nurtured – they must feel that their contributions are valued, that their opinions are important, and that their time is well spent. They must feel that they gain something personally by participating in the group.

In any diverse group of people of differing talents and abilities, disagreement will inevitably arise. People don't always see eye to eye. How you handle it is critical. Allow for difference of opinion. Conflict is necessary, and not a problem, unless it prevents the group from making progress.

Here are some suggestions to help develop a positive group dynamic for your new organization.

**Practice “active listening.”** Give feedback so people know they were heard. If someone is dominating the discussion, put a limit on how long each person can talk,

and give priority in the speaking order to those who have less to say.

**Don't ignore problems.** Deal with issues, not personalities. Discuss specific problems, and look for causes and solutions. Has there been a misunderstanding? Is someone being asked to do something they are not equipped to do? Suggest a change that will be good for the individual and the group.

**Set out clear expectations from the beginning.** Regular meetings and evaluations can redirect efforts, identify problems early, and prevent things from getting out of hand.

**Watch out for “rogue members” who join only to fulfill their own agendas.** Resolve this issue immediately. It may require finding them out of order at a meeting.

### Tools for Success

- Initially offer complimentary membership for the first year (to refuge volunteers).

- Consider using banquets, etc. to recruit new members from the community.

- Using personal contacts and asking people face to face gets better results.

- A membership brochure. (Other Friends groups and

NWRA can provide examples.)

- Set minimum membership dues to receive the newsletter and other products to cover the costs of printing and sending.

- Offer a variety of membership levels, (corporate, individual, lifetime). Make sure the amount and level of responsi-

bility are coordinated with the region.

- Consult with other groups that have tried specific membership drives, (hired a firm for a membership drive).

- Honor both those who contribute money and the members who contribute labor and attend meetings. (You need both and strategies to keep them, as members will differ.)

## VOLUNTEER RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

### Volunteers have the right to . . .

- Be treated as a co-worker
- Be given a suitable assignment
- Know as much as possible about the organization
- Be recognized and heard
- Receive training and continuing education for the task
- Have a regular evaluation of one's performance, and be given a variety of experiences

### Responsibilities of volunteers are to . . .

- Be sincere in the offer of service and believe in the value of the task being done
- Be loyal to the community organization with which one works
- Maintain the dignity and integrity of the community

organization with the public

- Accept the guidance and decisions of project coordinators
- Carry out duties promptly and reliably
- Be willing to participate in orientation, training programs and meetings
- Understand the function of the paid staff and maintain positive working relationships with them
- Stay within the bounds of the volunteer description, unless otherwise asked

---

*\*from Starting Up: A Handbook for New River and Watershed Organizations*

## Tools for Success

■ Keep volunteers busy, and give them responsibility, or you will lose them.

■ Ensure mutual respect of group members.

■ Listen, listen, listen!

■ Keep things "adult" and professional.

■ Trust and need form a sacred bond.

■ Be honest, enthusiastic, and have courage.

■ Prevent Friends group burn-out – plan your projects well.

■ Do not be too serious all of the time. Expect setbacks and be willing to laugh at them and then re-group. If it is not fun, then do not do it.

■ Deal with problems immediately! Never publicize differences, instead keep them within the group.

■ Encourage action with talk.

■ Know the issues personally.

■ Understand that it is a long-term commitment that you are making.

## Membership Checklist

Seek diversity in your membership.	
Create and maintain a computerized database of members.	
Develop lists of potential new members and actively recruit them.	
Offer member benefits such as a newsletter, with additional benefits to members who contribute more than the minimum dues.	
Keep members by personalizing their welcome to your group, giving them recognition, and keeping them well informed.	
Give members responsibilities that fit their skills, and challenge them.	
Always show and expect respect, keep things professional, and give and keep trust.	







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*Bison, Fort Niobrara NWR, Nebraska*

# Fundraising

## Tools to build the organization

- Do not be afraid to ask for money.
- Face the need for fund raising head-on and develop a plan for it.
- For some people, money equals having respect for your group.
- Set sound financial priorities.
- A small amount of start-up money is necessary.
- Create a broad base of members and contributors.

## Funding sources

- Board members
- Basic membership and special member contributions
- Programs and events (fees, donations, raffles)
- “Family/Neighbor” support
- Private donors (from membership, local community)
- Corporations (businesses, banks)
- Foundations
- Government
- Special fund raising drives

# Funding

Raising money is among the more important things your group needs to plan for. However, it need not be something to fear. With good planning, careful attention to building relationships, and showing the public what your group can do for the refuge, your treasury will grow, in time.

Brian O’Neill, of San Francisco’s Golden Gate National Park prefers to call fundraising “friend-raising,” and with good reason. In twenty years as Park Superintendent for Golden Gate, he has nurtured a solid network of friends and as a result has seen millions of dollars donated to the Park. People give to people. Fundraising is all about making new friends who are willing to commit their funds to your organization’s cause. O’Neill understands why people give. Success breeds success. People see great things being done with their contributions — they trust that when they donate, their money will be used wisely.

At first, your budget will be based on membership dues and small donations. In the first five years, most likely your group will accomplish a great deal on a shoestring budget. According to the NWRA’s Friends Survey, most groups five years old and younger operate with a budget of \$5,000 or less, and they report a multitude of accomplishments for their refuges.

Begin with the attitude that you can accomplish a great deal with very little money. Dedicated volunteers can make a big difference with their hands and hearts.

Even as a fledgling operation however, you do need some money. Some of the start up costs will include incorporation and non-profit filing fees, logo design, brochure development, newsletter, printing and mailing expenses.

You’ll need money for projects big and small, and to plan activities to reward your volunteers. An emergency or “rainy day” fund is helpful for unexpected or unplanned needs.

## Ways to begin raising money

- *Determine how much you need and develop a budget for each funding need.*
  - *Have specific goals and deadlines – develop a clarity of need.*
  
- *Determine the sources that you plan to go after and develop a plan and set strategy.*
  - *Seek in-kind donations for goods and services (e.g., computers, grant writing, lawyers, accountants, facilitators).*
  - *Be realistic in your plans (e.g., setting timelines for raising funds, assigning responsibilities).*
  - *Consider making use of grant writers and fund-raisers.*
  
- *Ask for funds*
  - *Board members shouldn't be afraid to ask for money and need to see fundraising as part of their job.*
  - *Get the right people to do the asking. Remember – people give to people.*
  - *Ensure that you are doing the right prospecting or asking*
  - *Get training if you need it.*
  - *Establish a communication link with donors.*
  
- *Be aware of the strings that may be attached to any donation.*
  - *Refuse donations that have strings that your organization can't live with because you'll find other sources of funds.*
  
- *Be sure to say "Please" and "Thank you."*
  - *Provide a donor recognition. Use a personal touch strategy.*

## Words of Wisdom From Other Friends Groups

“

Ask once a year or more often for special needs.

~

Express your thanks within 24 hours.

~

Establish a hierarchy of thank-you's to correspond to the levels of donation.

~

Every visitor to the refuge is a potential prospect.

~

Do not phone.

~

Make sure that you have peers asking peers.

~

Keep learning about asking.

~

Know your donors.

”

## Fundraising Checklist

Set up a budget. As a fledgling group, you will need start up money for things like incorporation and non-profit filing fees, printing costs for a newsletter and brochure and mailing expenses.	
Fundraising is “Friend-raising.” It depends on developing good relationships. Be sure to have peers asking peers.	
Early on your budget will be small, based on membership dues and small donations, but as you build your relationships, your treasury will grow.	
A great deal can be accomplish on a small budget.	
Ask and you will receive. Get the right people to do the asking.	
Set priorities. Develop a fundraising plan. Know how much you need and determine a strategy to get it.	
Always say “Please,” and “Thank You.”	
Always be willing to learn more about fundraising.	





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*Western meadowlark, Medicine Lake NWR, Montana*

# Outreach

# Communicating

Communication is the critical aspect of making it all work. Clear and effective communication is the backbone that supports all of your organization's other activities. Good communication means everyone understands their roles and responsibilities, and the work of the organization will be clear to members, refuge staff and the public. Poor communication will result in confusion and mistrust.

To be effective, your group needs to find ways to reach out to the public so they understand your group's mission and objectives and become aware of refuge issues. Ultimately, you want your outreach efforts to result in an increased membership and support of the refuge.

## A great resource book for outreach:

Getting the Word Out in the Fight to Save the Earth by Richard Beamish

The Johns Hopkins University Press – ISBN 0-8018-4895-4

*Monomoy NWR consists of two small barrier islands of 2,740 acres with official wilderness status, off the “elbow” of Cape Cod. The islands host more than half a million birds, some rare and threatened species. Over time, gull populations began to overwhelm smaller species. In 1994, the Fish and Wildlife Service, in a management decision, designated 175 acres as a gull-free zone. In 1996, the FWS implemented their management plan by poisoning several thousand gulls on Monomoy. Unfortunately, hundreds of these gulls died on the Cape Cod mainland, which upset the residents and created a firestorm of controversy . . .*

## The Story of . . .

The original Friends of Monomoy NWR were a group of retirees whose focus was to carry out work projects on the refuge. The group wasn't ready for the controversy that erupted when the US Fish and Wildlife Service made the decision to reduce the gull population. In hindsight, Dean Steeger, a Friends of Monomoy Board member, wishes his group had planned ahead, well before the issue hit, even though outreach wasn't the group's original focus. Steeger believes one obligation

of Friends groups is to be a voice of support for their refuge. To do this, he said, all groups should form relationships with people in their area who are the decision makers and establish contacts in the offices of local and State political representatives. Groups also should establish a relationship with the media, raising interest in the refuge in general before any issues arise. His advice, “The key is in the formation of your board. Get one or two people on the board who are

## Friends of Monomoy NWR

willing to do outreach, who are articulate. Your political success will depend on those one or two people.” He sees his role at Monomoy as that of an individual who is a member of the community and a Friend who can be a counterpoint between the opposition and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in situations where the FWS must tread lightly. The voice of Friends carry weight in the community, because they're the public, too —they're not the Federal Government.



Good outreach begins with clear internal communications between board members and with the membership. Everyone should be aware of and informed about what the group is doing, when events are taking place, and plans for the future. In other words, no surprises. Identify who will be the spokesperson (or people) for your group. It should be someone who can articulate clearly and concisely. Make sure that person has all the facts, and support that person.

Communication also must be clear between Friends and the refuge manager and staff. Here again it needs to be two way communication with no surprises. Build the relationship through good, consistent communication.

### Tools for outreach

- Reach out to other groups and organizations. Re-inventing the wheel is too time consuming.
- Start educating the public by speaking at organizations (not just environmental organizations) and to the broadcast media.
- Contact and enlist the users of the refuge.
- Involve politicians at the local, state, and national levels.
- Use your name. Make it visible. Get it out in front of people.

## Advice from Friends of Monomoy

### Remember your job as Friends:

- *To promote the National Wildlife Refuge System and its sound management.*
- *To serve as a litmus test to FWS. As members of the general public, they can see how their management decisions will “play” with the public by asking you first.*
- *Most members of the FWS are scientists. Friends can help them explain and interpret technical information to the general public.*

### Ways to reach the media:

- *Respond to newspaper articles with letters to the editor.*
- *Go to local and cable TV stations. Get a Public Service Announcement (PSA) made. Stations are obligated to run PSA's for free.*
- *Use the Internet, get a web site, publish your address in your brochure and anything you send out.*
- *Be professional in your image. Create a great logo, edit carefully.*
- *Call editors (not reporters) with story ideas, or even just to give your opinion on an issue. They usually ask questions and listen.*

## Internal communication

*Develop a way to communicate. Possibly use a newsletter and phone tree.*

*Communicate with all members regularly.*

*Meet regularly and often, possibly on a monthly basis.*

*Let everyone know what it is that you are doing.*

*Ensure open communication between the friends group and the refuge staff.*

*Share your technical knowledge.*

*Learn what kind of communication works best between members. Do not assume everyone knows.*

*No surprises!!!*

*Summarize meetings so everyone understands what was discussed.*

*Make sure there are no breaks in the lines of communication.*

*Do not keep quiet when you disagree or do not understand.*

*Do not burn any bridges.*

## Other Suggestions

Do your homework so that you know what you are talking about.

Develop and maintain credibility.

If you don't know, say so! Offer to find out, then do it.

Keep the channels of communication open between the group and the refuge and within the group.

Be factual and honest.

Desire to work together.

Maintain a sense of trust - off the record "trust" means you don't repeat something you promised not to.

Communicate frequently.

Share information before it becomes public.

Attend to good manners and show respect.

Share photographs (visual communication).

## The newsletter and membership brochure

Two outreach tools you will find useful are the newsletter and the membership brochure. These will help inform your members about the activities of your group and get your message to potential new members, legislators and people in the general community.

Even in the beginning when your budget is limited, take the time and spend as much as you can afford to produce a good product. Appearance counts. Graphics, eye catching headlines and distinct, easy to read type are all important ingredients to an effective newsletter or brochure.

Strive to be interesting and readable. Assume an intelligent audience, but don't assume they know the background and details of your story. Explain things clearly and completely.

Avoid dense text. Tell the story with pictures. Observe the one-third/two-thirds rule: Devote two-thirds of the publication to graphics, headlines and white space and one-third to text.

### Who gets your Newsletter?

- Members.
- Town/City Council.
- Conservation Commission.
- State and federal elected officials.
- Local library.
- Chamber of Commerce.
- Local conservation groups and other refuge stakeholders.
- Media contacts.

Once you have your nonprofit ruling, your group may be eligible to use bulk mail. Check with your post-office about their requirements. The rules are somewhat complicated, but worth checking into, as the savings are considerable.

## Newsletter and Brochure Tools

■ Collect newsletters and brochures you like. Use them as models in your own design.

■ Look for a printer with reasonable prices. Initially, when you have limited funds, see if your refuge will allow you to use their copy machine.

■ Do a production schedule a year in advance for a newsletter. Establish deadlines for preparation, printing and mailing.

■ Information should be concise, readable and to the point.

■ Avoid technical jargon, language, and acronyms.

■ Use a typeface that is clear and easy to read.

■ Edit. All writing can be made tighter. Get someone to proofread.

■ Keep your audience in mind.

■ Use lots of white space and graphics.

■ Good reference books:

*Elements of Style* by Strunk & White; *Chicago Manual of Style*; *Getting the Word Out* by Richard Beamish.

## Words of Wisdom From Other Friends Groups

“

Make sure everyone understands - translate technical language into familiar terms (define acronyms, place names, technical terms, jargon).

~

Tap into existing communication opportunities.

~

Be visible – show momentum.

~

Pick a name that people can remember – keep it simple.

~

Use graphics to capture and express the passion.

~

Be positive.

~

Make it look fun, even if it isn't!!!

~

Demonstrate awareness, understanding, caring, and action.

~

Edit – be professional with polished products.

~

Dress professionally.

~

Be consistent with your message.

~

Know who is speaking for your membership.

~

Conduct yourself professionally, even in adversarial situations.

~

Be appreciative – say thanks (in many ways)!!

~

Follow through and follow up.

~

Toot your horn – often and loudly.

”

## Outreach Checklist

Clear and effective communication is the key to your organization's success.	
Build public support for your group's activities by getting the word out about your group's activities to the public.	
Develop relationships with key editors in the media and political arena. Involve politicians at the State and local level.	
Be visible to the public. Find ways to use your name frequently, in a number of ways. Use all mediums available: newsletter, newspaper, cable, internet.	
Create and maintain a professional image. Develop an appropriate logo, edit everything you send out carefully.	
Know who your spokespeople are and let them carry your message. Make sure they have accurate information so they know what they're talking about. Be consistent with your message.	
Create an outreach plan and form those relationships before you need them!	
Interpret technical language into common language.	





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*Great blue heron, Blackwater NWR, Maryland*

# Celebrate Success

## Celebrate your successes

Perhaps one of the most important things your group needs to remember is to celebrate its successes. Celebrate big successes and little ones. It is the successes that will draw membership, volunteer participation, funds, and bring lasting recognition to your group.

Think about what defines overall success for each of your group's activities and plan to celebrate small successes along the way (especially for bigger, longer term projects). Holding out for the big, obvious successes might bring celebration into the picture too late. Besides, why wait until the end of a project to celebrate it?

The key is to find something to crow about, the silver lining, even the positive twist in a "failure." Fail with flair! Find something to celebrate, even when everything didn't go as planned. Reward the attempt, not just the outcome.

Celebrating success will give everyone in your group something tangible to feel good about. It is these positive feelings will help your group grow.

You can recognize your successes in a variety of ways. Say "Thank You," send a note, thank people in your newsletter. You can stage events, hold a dinner, make use of awards. Have fun with it, be silly. Most important, do it in a timely manner. Surprise people!

Use news articles to publicize the group's major successes. Use all the available opportunities, even five minutes at the board meetings can be built in to acknowledge your successes. Use pictures and words to describe your group's achievements. Give people the opportunity to see what your group is doing not only so the public can appreciate your accomplishments, but so that your members can too, so they can say to themselves, "Wow! Look at what we did!"

There will be others besides the people in your group that need thanks and celebration too. Remember the refuge staff, the community, your legislators and city officials. Thank you cards to donors are a nice surprise and always appreciated.

## Words of Wisdom From Other Friends Groups

“

Don't forget to do it.

~

Don't take people for granted.

~

It's okay to celebrate the partial successes. You do not have to be all done or 100% successful.

~

Be sure to publicize it. The whole group is recognized too.

~

Be sure the celebrations fit the successes.

~

Celebrate all year long, not just once a year.

~

Celebrate immediately. Do not wait too long or you lose the opportunities.

~

Saying "thanks" goes a long way. Say it often.

~

Negative feedback cannot be retracted and giving negative feedback can spell disaster for the group and the individual.

”



## Celebrate Success Checklist

Define what success means to your group. Celebrate often. Don't wait until a project is over. Celebrate the small successes too.	
Celebrating gives your group something tangible to feel good about. Positive feelings help the group to grow.	
Take advantage of any opportunity to celebrate success and acknowledge a job well done: your newsletter, at board meetings, in newspaper articles and letters to the editor, in a thank you note . . .	
Be sensitive to the differences of people in your group. Don't throw the spotlight on someone who would be made uncomfortable. Find another way to thank them.	
"Thank You." Two simple words that need to be used often.	
Consider anyone who needs to be thanked, not just members of your group, but also Refuge staff, members of the community, politicians, etc. . . .	
Post evidence of accomplishments with lists of the names of participants on a plaque near completed projects on the refuge.	
Celebrate with food. Throw a party.	





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*Racoon, Montezuma NWR, New York*

# Resources

## Where do you go from here?

The focus of this handbook has been to help you get started in the first year. Establishing your Friends group is just the beginning. We expect that you will have a busy year and many accomplishments over the next several months. Once you have established your group, you'll be asking what's next? You will also be working to build a stable organization that will have a long future.

The National Wildlife Refuge Association is dedicated to helping your group successfully meet its new challenges. Over the next couple of years, we will offer a number of programs to new and well-established groups.\* These will include:

- Workshops on getting started, fundraising and outreach.
- A Friends/NWRA joint membership program.
- Local networking programs for Friends groups in small geographic areas to meet and work together on local interests.
- An expanded Friends section in the NWRA quarterly newsletter.
- An expanded Friends section in Refuge Net, our web site on the Internet. We plan to make handbook materials available on this web site and will provide a Friends bulletin board for easy communications.
- Opportunity to become involved in regional and national policy and media initiatives.
- An annual National Refuge Friends Conference in Washington, D.C.

Assistance is also available from a variety of other sources, such as other Friends groups, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Center for Nonprofit Boards and local and national conservation organizations. We have listed ways to contact these and other resources in the next few pages.

If you have any additional questions or need help, be sure to contact us either by telephone at (202) 333-9075 or Email at [NWRA@refugenet.org](mailto:NWRA@refugenet.org).

(\*All programs are dependent upon funding.)

## Internet resources

✓ RefugeNET is the National Wildlife Refuge Association's web site on the Internet. This site contains a wealth of information about the refuge system, a directory of Friends groups, and action alerts. It's a great place to begin networking! <http://www.refugenet.org>

✓ National Center for Nonprofit Boards is a good resource for all questions you might have about nonprofit organizations, including forming your board. <http://www.ncnb.org>

✓ The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service home page is a good place to learn about refuges all over the country. <http://www.fws.gov>

## Resources from the National Wildlife Refuge Association

### Call (202) 333-9075 to ask for:

✓ A Friends Directory listing all Friends groups across the nation.

✓ Information on workshops, regional and subregional networking meetings sponsored by the National Wildlife Refuge Association.

✓ Referrals or direct assistance on filing for non-profit status.

✓ Names of experienced Friends groups who are willing to lend their expertise to new groups.

✓ The Refuge Support Group mini-grant program, conducted in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the National Audubon Society.

✓ Action Alerts on issues affecting the National Wildlife Refuge System, available through the NWRA Friends Listserve. To sign up for the Listserve, email [owner-nwrafriends@lists.toad.net](mailto:owner-nwrafriends@lists.toad.net)

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*Canada geese, Lewis and Clark NWR, WA / OR*

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## Appendix A

### President's Executive Order

#### THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

March 25, 1996

#### EXECUTIVE ORDER

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#### MANAGEMENT AND GENERAL PUBLIC USE OF THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in furtherance of the purposes of the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 (16 U.S.C. 742a), the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (16 U.S.C. 661), the National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act (16 U.S.C. 668dd), the Refuge Recreation Act (16 U.S.C. 460k), the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531), the Emergency Wetlands Resources Act (16 U.S.C. 3901), the North American Wetlands Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 4401) the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321), and other pertinent statutes, and in order to conserve fish and wildlife and their habitat, it is ordered as follows:

**Section 1. The Mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System.** The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System ("Refuge System") is to preserve a national network of lands and waters for the conservation and management of fish, wildlife, and plant resources of the United States for the benefit of present and future generations.

**Section 2. Guiding Principles.** To help ensure a bright future for its treasured national heritage, I hereby affirm the following four guiding principles for the management and general public use of the Refuge system:

- (a) **Public Use.** The Refuge System provides important opportunities for compatible wildlife-dependent recreational activities involving hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation.
- (b) **Habitat.** Fish and wildlife will not prosper without high-quality habitat, and without fish and wildlife, traditional uses of refuges cannot be sustained. The Refuge System will continue to conserve and enhance the quality and diversity of fish and wildlife habitat within refuges.
- (c) **Partnerships.** America's sportsmen and women were the first partners who insisted on protecting valuable wildlife habitat within wildlife refuges. Conservation partnerships with other Federal agencies, State agencies, Tribes, organizations, industry, and the general public can make significant contributions to the growth and management of the Refuge System.
- (d) **Public Involvement.** The public should be given a full and open opportunity to participate in decisions regarding acquisition and management of our National Wildlife Refuges.

Section 3. Directives to the Secretary of the Interior. To the extent consistent with existing laws and interagency agreements, the Secretary of the Interior, in carrying out his trustee and stewardship responsibilities for the Refuge System, is directed to:

- (a) recognize compatible wildlife-dependent recreational activities involving hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and environmental education and interpretation as priority general public uses of the Refuge System through which the American public can develop an appreciation for fish and wildlife;
- (b) provide expanded opportunities for these priority public uses within the Refuge System when they are compatible and consistent with sound principles of fish and wildlife management, and are otherwise in the public interest;
- (c) ensure that such priority public uses receive enhanced attention in planning and management within the Refuge System;
- (d) provide increased opportunities for families to experience wildlife-dependent recreation, particularly opportunities for parents and their children to safely engage in traditional outdoor activities, such as fishing and hunting;
- (e) ensure that the biological integrity and environmental health of the Refuge System is maintained for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans;
- (f) continue, consistent with existing laws and interagency agreements, authorized or permitted uses of units of the Refuge System or other Federal agencies, including those necessary to facilitate military preparedness;
- (g) plan and direct the continued growth of the Refuge System in a manner that is best designed to accomplish the mission of the Refuge System, to contribute to the conservation of the ecosystems of the United States, and to increase support for the Refuge System and participation from conservation partners and the public;
- (h) ensure timely and effective cooperation and collaboration with Federal agencies and State fish and wildlife agencies during the course of acquiring and managing National Wildlife Refuges;
- (i) ensure appropriate public involvement opportunities will be provided in conjunction with refuge planning and management activities;
- (j) identify, prior to acquisition, existing compatible wildlife-dependent uses of new refuge lands that shall be permitted to continue on an interim basis pending completion of comprehensive planning.

Section 4. Judicial Review. This order does not create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or equity by a party against the United States, its agencies, its officers, or any person.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

THE WHITE HOUSE  
March 25, 1996.

## Appendix B

### Robert's Rules of Order\*

The following is a brief overview of the rules of parliamentary procedure, and not intended to be a full or definitive reference. You can obtain a copy of Robert's Rules of Order, Revised, published by Scott-Foresman and Company in Chicago. There's also a paperback edition of Robert's Rules published by Spire Books, Fleming H. Revell Company in Tappan, New Jersey.

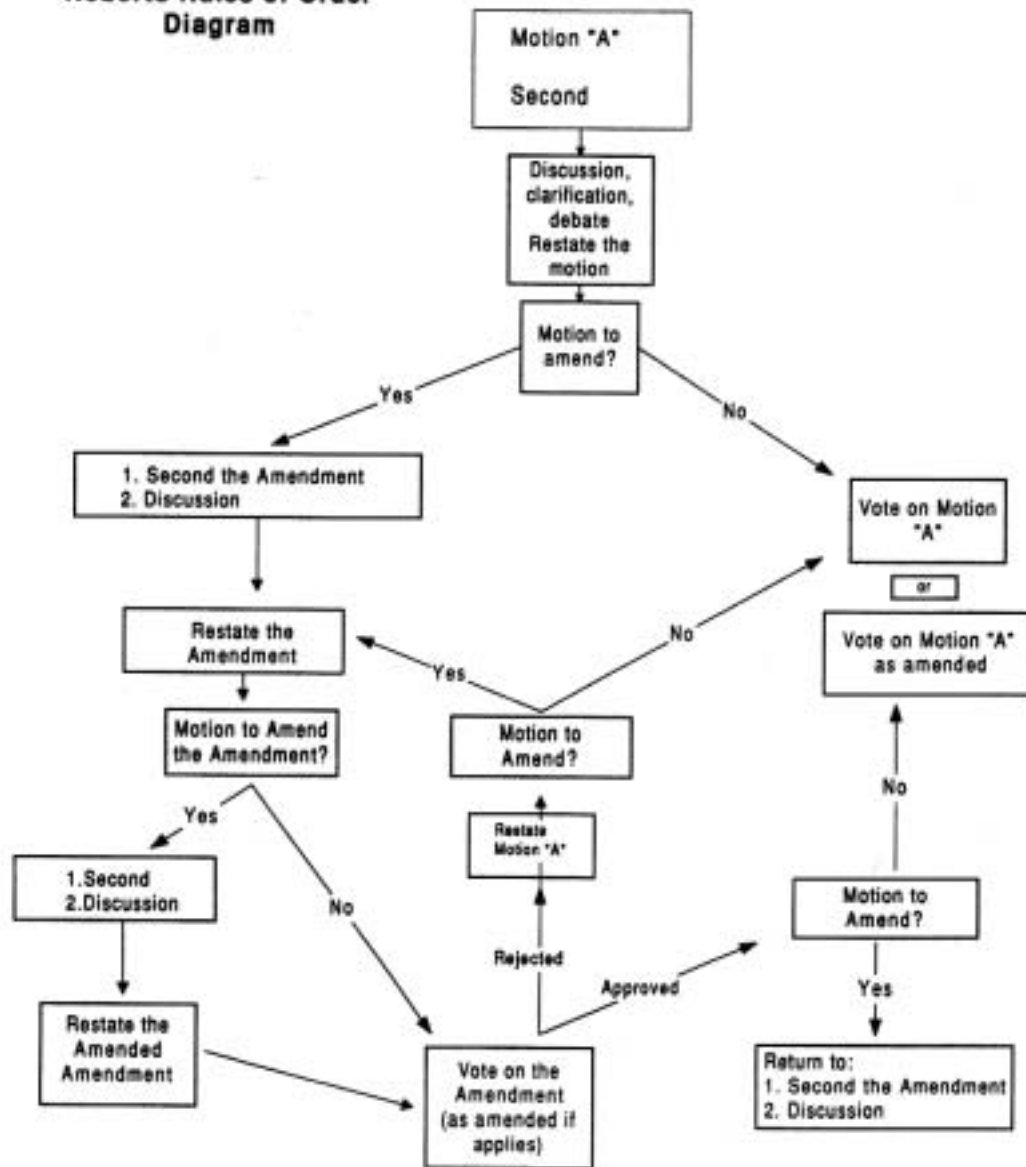
The use of Robert's Rules of Order will allow your group to operate under standard parliamentary procedures of standard governance. They're the ground rules of common sense and courtesy for running an orderly board meeting, and while not mandatory, it is useful to write the use of these rules into your bylaws. These rules are helpful even if you plan to run a fairly informal board.

There's nothing mysterious about these rules. Most boards will use them at their most basic level. A beginning board will probably never need to get into the more complicated levels of the rules. Here is how a group would proceed under these rules in making a decision:

- A board member moves that a decision be made.
- Another member seconds the motion, which means they support the action proposed.
- Once the motion is made and seconded, there is opportunity for discussion, clarification, and debate.
- When everyone is satisfied with the subject, there is a vote.
- Before voting, the person in the chair should restate the motion, to be sure everyone knows what is being discussed and decided.

There will be times when you may want to amend the motion before taking a vote. The group may decide during discussion that the original motion as moved doesn't quite describe the action they want to vote on. Consult the following chart on how to proceed.

**Roberts Rules of Order Diagram**



- |   |  |   |   |
|---|--|---|---|
| <p><b>1.</b> Motion is made, Seconded and Discussed</p> | <p><b>2.</b> If No Amendment, Vote on Motion "A"</p> | <p><b>3.</b> If there are Amendments, Discussion occurs. Amendment is possibly amended one more time. A Vote is taken on the Amendment. This process continues until all amendments are discussed and approved or rejected.</p> | <p><b>4.</b> Once all Amendments are discussed and finalized, a vote is taken on Motion "A" as amended.</p> |
|---|--|---|---|



Here are a few additional points:

- If a motion is made and not seconded, the motion is automatically lost, and nothing further should be said about it. If there isn't a second, it means the subject is not something the group wants to spend time on, and the individual who proposed the motion should not presume upon the group's good nature by commenting on the subject as though it has been accepted for discussion.
- For most votes, a majority of those present is all that's needed to approve or disapprove a motion (simple majority). Your bylaws and Robert's Rules can stipulate that certain votes require a two-thirds majority, such as for an amendment of the bylaws.
- When a member feels the debate has gone on long enough, they may say, "I move the previous question" or "Move the question" or even "Question."
- What they are doing is moving that the debate be ended. If there is a second, there can be no debate on the motion to close the debate, but two-thirds of the group must vote for the motion.
- Debate cannot be ended unless the group actually agrees. If just one person disagrees or is waiting to say something, the debate continues.
- The maker of the motion being debated cannot propose to end the debate.
- Voting can go from being very informal to formal. Very often there is a call for a voice vote. "All those in favor please say 'Aye.' All those opposed please say 'No.'" Usually the decision is clear.
- If the result of the voice vote are not clear then there would be a raising of the hands. In a large group there can be a standing vote and a count off, where each person counts as they sit down.
- There can be a motion to table. If a board member feels the debate is going nowhere or the group feels they don't want to decide the issue at hand an individual can "move to table" until some later time.
- Sometimes a matter can be moved to be postponed until a later specified time.

\*Adapted from *The Board Member's Book*, by Brian O'Connell, The Foundation Center, New York.



## Appendix C

### Job Descriptions for Board Members

#### **Job Description for President/Chairperson of the Board**

- Oversee board and executive committee meetings
- Serve as ex-officio member of all committees
- Work in partnership with the chief executive to make sure board resolutions are carried out
- Call special meetings if necessary
- Appoint all committee chairs and recommend who will serve on committees
- Assist chief executive in preparing agenda for board meetings
- Assist chief executive in conducting new board member orientation
- Oversee searches for a new chief executive
- Coordinate chief executive's annual performance evaluation
- Work with the nominating committee to recruit new board members
- Coordinate periodic board assessment with the chief executive
- Act as an alternate spokesperson for the organization
- Periodically consult with board members on their roles and help assess their performance

From *The Role of the Board Chairperson*. Washington, DC: National Center for Nonprofit Boards, 1993.

#### **Job Description for Vice-President of the Board**

- Attend all board meetings
- Serve on the executive committee
- Carry out special assignments as requested by the board president
- Understand the responsibilities of the board president and be able to perform these duties in the president's absence
- Participate as a vital part of the board leadership

#### **Job Description for Secretary of the Board**

- Attend all board meetings
- Serve on the executive committee
- Maintain all board records and ensure their accuracy and safety
- Review board minutes
- Assume responsibilities of the president in the absence of the board president, president-elect, and vice president
- Provide notice of meetings of the board and/or of a committee when such notice is required

#### **Job Description for Treasurer of the Board**

- Knowledge of the organization and personal commitment to its goals and objectives
- Understanding of financial accounting for nonprofit organizations
- Serves as financial officer of the organization and as chairperson of the finance committee.
- Manages, with the finance committee, the board's review of and action related to the board's financial responsibilities.
- Works with the chief executive and the chief financial officer to ensure that appropriate financial reports are made available to the board on a timely basis.
- Assists the chief executive or the chief financial officer in preparing the annual budget and presenting the budget to the board for approval.
- Reviews the annual audit and answers board members' questions about the audit.

From: [www.ncnb.org](http://www.ncnb.org) (National Center for Nonprofit Boards) Reprinted with permission.



## Appendix D

### Sample Board Member "Job" Description from Friends of Parker River NWR

#### Objectives:

- Commitment to and understanding of the organization's mission
- Ability to translate mission into action for the organization
- Knowledge of and respect for the refuge ecosystem of Parker River NWR
- Willingness to attend at least 75% of the monthly board meetings
- Willingness and ability to coordinate and lead a subcommittee
- Willingness to participate as a team member with the rest of the board and be able to devote thought, time and energy to plans developed by the board
- Willingness to lobby
- Ability to work with people of varied backgrounds and philosophies
- Demonstrated leadership ability and vision for the organization: for example leading a subcommittee, organizing events, developing education programs, or other significant contributions to the organization
- Ability to delegate
- Ability to communicate effectively
- Ability to organize, plan and complete projects
- Ability to work in groups
- Able to put the good of shared goals above personal agenda

#### Job Description:

- Attend at least 75% of board meetings
- Lead one or more subcommittees
- Represent Friends in education, information, lobby, public relations and other related activities
- Participate in phone tree and other membership communications needs as they arise
- Participate in organizational planning performed by the board and take responsibility for projects that are developed
- Work constructively with Refuge management, business and government authorities
- Accurately convey information on Refuge policies and programs
- Communicate Refuge/Friends programs and policies to the general public



## Appendix E

### Guidelines for Procedures in Board Governance from Ding Darling Wildlife Society

Adopted by the Board of Directory, March 12, 1994

#### **I. There shall be a Directors Nominating Committee.**

- A. Composition: two current directors and one non-director member of the Ding Darling Wildlife Society (DDWS)
- B. Process: Appointed by the President with the approval of the Board
- C. Time: No later than the August meeting of the board.
- D. Charge: to present a slate of directors no later than the October meeting and preferably at the September meeting. They shall maintain confidentiality throughout the process.
- E. Guidelines in the process of selecting nominees:
  - 1. Full-time resident of the area
  - 2. Does not have to be a member of the DDWS but must become a member to serve
  - 3. Has a perceived commitment to the refuge
  - 4. Is prepared to become a working director devoting a significant amount of time to board business
  - 5. May have special skills needed by the board
- F. Procedure:
  - 1. Make use of a list of DDWS members showing background experience and past committee involvement
  - 2. Provide the board with a list of recommended nominees equal to the number of board openings for approval of the board before confirming nomination to prospective directors
  - 3. Provide prospective nominee with a job description
  - 4. At least two members of the Directors Nominating Committee should interview each prospective nominee in person, if possible, and explain how the board works, what kind of commitment the nominee would be asked to make, and the nominating procedure.

## II. Nominating Committee for Officers of the Board

- A. Composition: This committee shall be composed of four directors of the board appointed by the President and approved by the board.
- B. Time: This committee should convene as soon as the slate of directors is accepted by the board and present the proposed slate of officers no later than the November meeting of the board.
- C. Procedure:
  - 1. The Officer's Nominating Committee should use the list of each officer's activities as the job description for each office.
  - 2. The committee should interview each prospective nominee and explain the requirements of the office.

## III. Standing Committees

- A. The Chairperson of the Standing Committees shall be recommended by the President and approved by the board no later than the January meeting of the board.
- B. Selection of Standing Committee members - Procedures:
  - 1. The committee chairperson shall reconstitute the committee as soon as feasible for the new membership year, January 1st.
  - 2. Using the annotated list of DDWS members, including committee members from the previous year, the chairperson will select committee members.
  - 3. The chairperson will prepare a list of the qualifications needed in prospective committee members, the kind of work the members would do, and the probable time commitment and use this information when interviewing prospective members.
  - 4. The Committee chairperson will provide the President with a list of committee members with their address and telephone number which will be kept in the Society office.
- C. Standing Committee Chairpersons will report to the board and communicate between board meetings with the President and the Vice-President.

## IV. Ad hoc Committees

- A. Will be appointed by the President with the approval of the board when there is a perceived need and will serve until their charge is completed.



- B. Ad hoc committee Chairpersons will report to the board and communicate between board meetings with the President and the Vice President.

#### **V. Titles of Directors**

- A. Officers: President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary who will comprise the Executive Committee
- B. Assistant Treasurer and Assistant Secretary
- C. Chairpersons of Standing Committees
  - 1. Budget
  - 2. Membership
  - 3. Sales
  - 4. Publications
  - 5. Memorial Fund

#### **VI. Responsibilities of the titled directors (attached with these additions)**

- A. In addition to acting in place of the President, the Vice President will be responsible for:
  - 1. Facilitating the work of the standing committee chairpersons by attending their meetings when appropriate
  - 2. Writing one of the four Newsletter columns otherwise prepared by the President
  - 3. Acting as the Parliamentarian (becoming familiar with Roberts Rules of Order)
- B. The Assistant Treasurer will become fully able to carry out any and all of the responsibilities assigned to the Treasurer
  - 1. The Assistant Treasurer will act as Treasurer in the absence of that officer unless not yet qualified to do so
  - 2. The Assistant Treasurer will carry out the responsibilities assigned by the Treasurer and associated with that office.
- C. The Assistant Secretary will become fully able to carry out any and all of the responsibilities of the Secretary.
  - 1. The Assistant Secretary will act as Secretary in the absence of that officer
  - 2. The Assistant Secretary will carry out responsibilities assigned by the Secretary and associated with that office and the nominating procedure.



## Appendix F

### The Board Manual\*

The foundation of a committed, knowledgeable, and effective board is orientation and education. As an essential companion to orientation and education, every organization should have a thorough, easy to use manual that board members can use throughout their terms. A board manual serves two functions. For the new board member, it is an orientation handbook that provides useful information about the organization, board structure and operations, and fellow board members and staff. For the balance of a member's board service, the manual then becomes an indispensable working tool and a central resource about the organization and the board. Materials can be added and removed to create an up to date reference. The board manual is developed by staff in consultation with the board chairperson and other officers. Present it to board members in a durable, attractive looseleaf notebook with a table of contents and clearly divided and labeled sections. Date every item, and replace material when necessary. Insert stationery, brochures, and similar items in pockets of the notebook.

#### **To develop a working manual that board members use and rely on:**

- Don't overwhelm new board members with too much information. When several examples are available (e.g., current press clippings), include only one.
- Keep each item brief. A two paragraph biography of the executive director is preferable to a four page resume, for example.
- Use the handbook as a "textbook" during board orientation. Encourage board members to read and ask questions about the material.
- Ask board members to evaluate the usefulness of the manual each year. Revise the contents or format based on their comments.

#### **Board Manual Contents Checklist:**

A thorough board manual can include the following materials. (Remember to keep each item as concise as possible.)

##### **General information**

- History, purpose, and administration
- Mission statement
- Organization fact sheet (brief history and summary of current programs)  
Articles of incorporation (corporate charter) and bylaws
- Current strategic plan (or a summary)
- Organizational chart
- Biography of executive director
- Annual calendar or program schedule

**Board Information**

- Description of individual board member's responsibilities
- Committee job descriptions
- Current annual calendar of board and committee meetings
- Up to date list of board members' names, professional titles, addresses, and telephone numbers (identify officers and committee chairpersons)
- Description of board members' liability insurance

**Finance and Fundraising**

- Current financial statements and budget for the current fiscal year
- Most recent audit report
- List of donors for two fiscal years

**Other Information**

- Annual report
- Selected press releases and articles
- Promotional material (membership brochure, information brochure, advertisements, etc.)
- A copy of *The Governance Guide: All About Boards* (available from NCNB)
- List of suggested resources (publications and organizations) related to the organization's area of interest

**Board and Committee Minutes**

- Most recent minutes

**Board Member Information Forms**

Judith Grummon Nelson's *Six Keys to Recruiting, Orienting, and Involving Nonprofit Board Members* provides samples of two information forms for new board members to complete and return to staff:

- A board member information form, which provides details such as phone numbers, spouse's name, other board memberships, and special areas of interest (for use by the executive director and development office)
- A prospective board member referral form, which enables members to recommend candidates for board service (for use by the Nominating Committee)

\*From: [www.ncb.org](http://www.ncb.org) (National center for Nonprofit Boards) reprinted with permission.

**Appendix G**  
**Sample Cooperating Association Agreement**

AGREEMENT BETWEEN

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
AND THE

\_\_\_\_\_ ASSOCIATION

This Memorandum of Agreement is between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (hereinafter referred to as the "Service"), an agency of the United States Department of the Interior, acting through the Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (hereinafter referred to as "Director"), or his/her Regional Director designee and the \_\_\_\_\_ Association (hereinafter referred to as the "Association"), acting through the Chairman of its Board of Directors or the Board's designee.

WITNESSETH:

WHEREAS, it is a purpose of the Service to provide recreational opportunities within Service administrative units when they are compatible with the primary conservation objectives of such units, as provided in the Refuge Recreation Act of 1962 (16 U.S.C. 460k et. seq.); and

WHEREAS, interpretive and educational materials and programs enhance the appreciation of our Nation's fish and wildlife resources and thereby encourage utilization of the recreational opportunities provided on Service administrative units; and

WHEREAS, the Association has the educational, historical, biological, and nonprofit purposes of assisting educational, interpretive and biological activities of the Service; and

WHEREAS, the Service desires to provide facilities, equipment, and cooperating services for the sales of interpretive and educational materials for the benefit of the visiting public; and

WHEREAS, the Service desires that the nonprofit Association donate financial proceeds, goods, and/or services to advance Service purposes and objectives, endeavors which would otherwise result in increased costs to the taxpayer or a lower level of services and benefits to the public.

WHEREAS, the Association has been formed to:

(This Section describes the general reasons the Association has been founded at this specific administrative site.)

NOW THEREFORE, pursuant to authority contained in the Acts of September 28, 1962 (16 U.S.C. 460k-2); May 28, 1963 (16 U.S.C. 460l-(f)(1)); October 14, 1966 (16 U.S.C. 668dd(b)(1)); November 8, 1978 (16 U.S.C. 742f(a)(4)); March 10, 1934 (16 U.S.C. 661);

and other laws supplemental thereto and amendatory thereof, and in consideration of the mutual benefits which will accrue to the Service and the Association, the parties agree as follows:

## 1. AUTHORIZATION

The Service authorizes the Association to provide, and the Association agrees to provide, the hereinafter described interpretive, educational, recreational, and biological support services to the visiting public and the Service for a period of 5 years commencing on the day following the ratification of this Agreement by the Service. This Agreement will automatically renew for one additional 5-year period on October 1 of the last year, unless 60 days written notice of cancellation is given by either party before the date of renewal. While the Service reserves the right to terminate the agreement, or any part thereof, without the necessity of any legal process upon 60 days written notice, the Service will hold a meeting with the Association, prior to termination, to discuss reasons for termination.

## 2. ASSOCIATION AND SERVICE RESPONSIBILITIES

The Association shall be entitled to use the facilities within the Service administrative units, listed in Section 2C(1) and designated in Exhibit A, for the sale of educational and interpretive materials for the benefit of the visiting public.

### A. Donations

Donations to the Service of money, goods, or services shall be used primarily to improve, maintain, and update the refuge's interpretive, educational, recreational and biological programs. Guidance on developing priority projects can be determined through review of the Station's Master Plan, Public Use Plan, and public use requirements documents. Donations shall not be used to circumvent government regulations or policies.

### B. Sales Terms

(1) Both parties shall cooperate in the planning and design of merchandise to be sold by the Association and in the facilities provided by the Service.

(2) Interpretive and educational materials, such as videos, publications, maps, visual aids, handicrafts, and other objects which illustrate the purpose of the administrative unit or reinforce the goals of the Service are the only items to be sold. Postcards, t-shirts, patches, pins, caps, etc., that reinforce Service and station mission fall into this category and may be sold. This policy does not prohibit the Service from granting a concession permit to an Association authorizing the sale of other items.

(3) Original artifacts are not to be sold. This includes such things as potsherds or battlefield relics to which the Antiquities Act of June 8, 1906 (34 Stat. 225, 16 U.S.C. Sec 431-433) or Archaeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (43 CFR, Parts 3 and 7) would apply if discovered on public lands, notwithstanding whether such objects were in fact discovered on lands owned or controlled by the United States.

(4) This Agreement does not grant the Association the right to make sales which infringe on applicable rights of a concessionaire.

(5) The Association and the Project Leader (or a Service employee designated by him/her) will work together to maintain a high standard of quality in all materials produced or sold.

(6) The Project Leader (or a Service employee designated by him/her) is responsible for approving the sale of any item proposed by the Association before the item can be offered for sale. Both parties will review new publications to ensure a high editorial and design quality.

(7) Both parties will work together to set sales prices that are fair and equitable.

(8) Both parties will work together to ensure that sales items are displayed in good taste and in keeping with the general design and decor of the administrative unit.

### C. Facilities

(1) The Service shall provide the Association with such sales, storage, work, or other facility space deemed necessary or desirable as agreed to by both parties and as identified in Exhibit A. The Service reserves the right to relocate or withdraw these facilities upon 60 days written notice. The Service shall have access to all facilities for protection and survey purposes.

(2) Either party may redesign, renovate, or construct new sales, storage, work, or other facility space subject to the agreement by both parties. This includes display structures, furnishings, equipment, signing, and display lighting in the immediate area. All permanent improvements made by the Association shall become the property of the United States. The Project Leader must give final approval prior to any redesign or construction.

(3) The Service shall provide the Association with incidental utility services, including water, electricity, heat, and air conditioning to the extent that these utilities are available and required for the operation of the building for governmental purposes. All other utilities are to be provided by the Association.

(4) The Service shall provide all general maintenance and repair services for the Government-owned buildings in which the Association facilities are located. The Association shall at all times keep the facilities identified in Exhibit A clean and presentable.

(5) Reasonable care shall be exercised by both parties to prevent damage to Association and Government property.

(6) Special Provisions:

(Provisions that distinguish how this Association will use Government facilities are specified here.)

#### D. Records and Accounting

- (1) The Association shall conduct its fiscal operations in accordance with generally accepted business and accounting practices as identified in Exhibit B.
- (2) Service policy is that a CPA audit is recommended when the Association's sales exceed \$250,000 during one year. An annual audit, verified by an independent CPA or public accountant, is necessary.
- (3) The Association shall submit to the Service Director, through the Project Leader and the Regional Director, following the end of each fiscal year (October 1 - September 30), a complete fiscal report (Exhibit C). This report shall be accompanied by a written summary of Association activities for the year. This report will be submitted through the Service Liaison at the administrative unit to the Regional Coordinator by November 30 of each year.
- (4) The Director, or his/her designee, may review any of the records of the Association during the term of this agreement.

#### E. Personnel

- (1) The Project Leader and the Association's Board of Directors shall each designate a person to act as liaison with the other party.
- (2) Association employees and Board of Directors shall be oriented to the Service mission and the administrative unit's operational activities.
- (3) Association employees may not be assigned to visitor contact activities until approval to assume such duties is granted by the Project Leader.
- (4) The Association shall make every effort to provide the personnel necessary to operate its sales and administrative functions. If the Association hires personnel to provide these services, the Project Leader or designated alternate will monitor and direct those personnel. Personnel hired by the Association can perform only the functions for which they were employed.
- (5) Service employee assistance may be requested of the Project Leader when the Association's level of sales will not support salaries and the Association cannot locate volunteer assistance. Service personnel may offer sales items to the public as an individual supplement, incidental to their duties.
- (6) The Service and the Association will maintain an evident and distinct separation between their activities. All steps shall be taken to avoid even the appearance that the Service directs the management or any decision-making process of the Association.
- (7) Association personnel are not Government employees and are not authorized to undertake any Governmental function or activity on behalf of the Service beyond agreed upon duties.
- (8) No Association employee shall wear a Service or other Government uniform. All



Association employees shall wear some easily observable and readily identifiable insignia of the Association affiliation when at the administrative unit and on Association business.

#### F. Approval and Activities

(1) Association decisions on the outlet's operation hours, selection of merchandise, rates of visitor services, prices of merchandise, and standards of service shall be subject to approval by the Project Leader.

(2) To ensure that Service standards are met, the Association must acquire the Projects Leader's approval before it engages in any projects or activities.

### 3. SUPPLEMENTAL AGREEMENTS

The Service and the Association further agree that, by supplemental agreement, the Association may offer additional educational, interpretive, and biological services if these services support the mission of the Service. Services may include, but are not limited to, employment of personnel for the sales outlet, the sale of products, and the purchase of supplies for the station.

### 4. INDEMNIFICATION AND INSURANCE

A. The Association shall indemnify, save and hold harmless, and defend the United States against all fines, claims, damages, losses, judgments, and expenses arising out of or from any omission or activity of the Association in connection with activities under this Agreement.

B. The Association shall procure public and employee liability insurance with a minimum limitation of \$250,000 for any number of claims from any one incident, with respect to the Association and its employees. The United States of America shall be named as an additional insured on all such policies. All such policies shall specify that the insurer shall have no right of subrogation against the United States for payment of any premiums or deductibles thereunder, and such insurance policies shall be assumed by, credited to the account of, and undertaken at the Association's sole risk.

C. The liability of the United States arising out of the conduct of this agreement shall be governed by the Federal Tort Claims Act, now and as may be amended.

D. Association members who are also official station volunteers and have a signed Volunteer Agreement on file will be covered under the Federal Tort Claims Act and the Federal Employees Compensation Act, now and as may be amended.

### 5. ASSOCIATION ORGANIZATION

A. The Association's Articles of Incorporation and By-laws shall comply with requirements of the State in which the Association is incorporated. Nonprofit and tax exempt status must be maintained in accordance with applicable State and Federal laws; such as Internal Revenue Service Section 501(c)(3). This contract will automatically terminate if nonprofit status is lost.

B. The Association's Board of Directors must have a non-Service member majority. Service employees may be voting members of the Association; however, they must not hold any voting position on the Association's Board of Directors. The Board of Directors must include, as a minimum, a chairperson, treasurer, executive secretary, and the Service Liaison who serves as an ex officio (nonvoting) member. Notwithstanding these four Board positions, Service employees may hold other Board positions, serving as ex-officio members only.

C. The Association business manager, or the Service employee who occupies the equivalent position, represents the interests of the Fish and Wildlife Service. The scope of responsibility for this position shall be limited to assistance in oversight of the Association's day-to-day routine business and provision of cooperative assistance as a liaison to the Association. Service employees will at all times comply with the Employee Responsibility and Conduct regulations of the Department of the Interior appearing at 43 C.F.R. Part 20.

D. Service employees shall not participate in any Association decision concerning the relationship of the Association with the Service, including but not limited to, executing or negotiating contracts, signing checks, or hiring or firing Association employees.

E. The Association Treasurer shall not be a Service employee.

## 6. ASSIGNMENT

No transfer or assignment of this Agreement or of any part thereof or interest herein, directly or indirectly, voluntary or involuntary, shall be made unless transfer or assignment is approved by both parties in writing.

## 7. MISCELLANEOUS

A. The rights and benefits conferred by this Agreement shall be subject to the laws of the United States governing the Service and its employees, and to the rules and regulations promulgated thereunder, whether now in force or hereafter enacted or provided. The mention of specific restrictions, conditions, and stipulations herein shall not be construed as in any way impairing the general powers of supervision, regulation, and control by the Service.

B. No member of, or delegate to, Congress, or Resident Commissioner, shall be admitted to any share or part of this Agreement or to any benefit that may arise therefrom, but this restriction shall not be construed to extend to this Agreement if made with a corporation or company for its general benefit.

C. The Association agrees that all of its activities shall be conducted in accordance with all applicable laws and regulations, both State and Federal. Specifically, the Association shall comply with the requirements of (a) Executive Order No. 11246 of September 24, 1965, as amended by Executive Order No. 11375 of October 13, 1967 (b) Title V., Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act of September 26, 1973 (P.L. 93-112), as amended, which requires Government contractors and subcontractors to take affirma-

tive action to employ and advance in employment qualified handicapped individuals, as set forth in Exhibit D, attached hereto and made part hereof (c) the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of December 15, 1967, as amended, 29 U.S.C. Section 621, et. seq, and (d) with regulations heretofore or hereinafter promulgated, relating to nondiscrimination in employment and in providing facilities and service to the public, as set forth in Exhibit E, attached hereto and made a part thereof.

D. In all cases where rights or privileges are granted herein in general or indefinite terms, the extent of the use of such rights or privileges by the Association, shall be determined by further written agreement.

This agreement is effective between the Association and the Service with regard to the following specified Service administrative units, to wit:

(NAME OF THE ASSOCIATION)

E. Termination: This cooperative agreement may be terminated by either party with 60 days written notice to the other party. While the Service reserves the right to terminate the agreement or any part thereof, at any time upon at least 60 days written notice without the necessity of any legal process, the Service will hold a meeting with the Association prior to the termination, setting forth the reasons for the termination. The Service reserves the right to terminate the agreement immediately if it is in the public interest to do so.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Association has caused this agreement to be executed this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_.

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
 President  
 (name of association)

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the Service has caused this Agreement to be ratified this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

By: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Regional Director  
 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

## Exhibit A

This exhibit describes those facilities within the National Wildlife Refuge which are designated for use by the Association. A clear, concise written description and/or floor plan shall be used to designate facilities assigned for use by the Association to carry out its educational, historical, scientific, and nonprofit purposes.

## Exhibit B

INTRODUCTION  
TO  
STANDARD ACCOUNTING SYSTEM

The Cooperating Association Standard Accounting System prescribed herein covers the basic requirements for enabling associations to comply with regulations under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code and therefore provides the Fish and Wildlife Service with financial information to satisfy its needs.

Associations will no longer be required to use the old standard accounting system account numbers prescribed in the National Park Service Cooperating Association Management Handbook; however, most associations will find it convenient to continue to use those accounts and numbers that are necessary to meet the requirements of the annual financial report. Each Association should consult with its own certified public accountant or auditor, and operate according to their individual needs to meet day-to-day business requirements and the requirements of the annual reporting form. Two published guidelines are herewith recommended:

Financial Recordkeeping for Small Stores, Small Business Management Series No. 32, Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 20402

A Manual on Bookselling, How to Open and Run Your Own Book-Store, Crown Publishers, Inc., One Park Ave., New York, NY 10016

There are many other simplified accounting guides on the market. Choose the one which best meets your requirements. The following annual report requirements must be met:

1. The Cooperating Association fiscal year runs from October 1 through September 30.
2. Audits by a C.P.A. are not required for associations with gross sales amounting to less than \$250,000.
3. A complete annual financial report, supported by an audit verification when necessary, will be submitted through the appropriate Regional Director to the Director, FWS, Washington, D.C., 20240, ATTN: Cooperating Association Coordinator, within 90 days of the end of the fiscal year or by January 1. This report should be accompanied by a completed information form. The Washington Office will provide an information form by October 15 of each year.

Please note that the IRS requirement for submission of Form 990 is the 15th of the month following the end of the fiscal year.

4. Non-profit and tax exempt status must be maintained in accordance with State and local specifications. In order to maintain tax exempt status with the Internal Revenue Service, you must file an application for recognition under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code (Form 1023).
5. Complete IRS Form 990 according to instructions and copy for submission as part of your annual report to the Service. (Note there are penalties for late submission of Form 990 to the IRS. Keep up to date on IRS revisions and new rulings on Form 990. Also note that Form 990 is subject to public inspection.

Exhibit C

U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
COOPERATING ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REPORT FORM

Fiscal Year \_\_\_\_\_

1. Region: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_
  2. Name of field station: \_\_\_\_\_
  3. Name of association: \_\_\_\_\_
  4. Date of initial agreement: \_\_\_\_\_
  5. Date agreement terminates: \_\_\_\_\_
  6. Total annual number of visitors through sales areas (visitor center): \_\_\_\_\_
  7. Hours and days of operation: \_\_\_\_\_
  8. Total number of FWS staff hours (FY) used in association operation: \_\_\_\_\_
  9. Revenue: \_\_\_\_\_ Disbursements: \_\_\_\_\_
- Sales: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Association Operations: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Donations: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Direct \$ to station: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
(total of 10 (a-c) below.)
- Memberships: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Loans: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Gross Revenue: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total Disbursements: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

10. List dollar amount of donations to the field station this            year:

a. Cash donation to the Service            \$ \_\_\_\_\_

b. Dollars for services, assistance to FWS  
(e.g., salaries of staff who also  
provide informational services)            \$ \_\_\_\_\_

c. Dollars for products, assistance to FWS  
(e.g., cost of free publications,  
outreach materials, etc.)            \$ \_\_\_\_\_

11. List any highlights, other than statistics on book sales, achieved by the cooperating association and provide a short narrative description. An example entry is: listing the number of volunteer hours the cooperating association members contributed in the past year to the field station through their association's activities and then providing a short explanation of some of these activities. (You may attach additional pages and photographs.)

12. What suggestions do you have for improving the operation of cooperating associations within the Fish and Wildlife Service or their partnership with the Fish and Wildlife Service?

#### NEW INFORMATION REQUESTED

13. Provide narrative and statistics that describe outstanding persons or community outreach projects which supported the mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Refuge System, or the field station. Because narrative descriptions are a key source for material used in the Service's cooperating association annual report, provide specifics. (You may attach additional pages or photographs.)

14. Please describe any new or big sale items the association has that enhance the public's awareness of wildlife and its habitat, appreciation of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service efforts to conserve natural resources, and support for greater resource stewardship responsibility. (examples: videos, special books, native plant nursery, tours, or other creative items).

#### Exhibit D

##### EMPLOYMENT OF THE HANDICAPPED

(a) The Contractor will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of physical or mental handicap in regard to any position for which the employee or applicant for employment is qualified. The Contractor agrees to take affirmative action to employ, advance in employment and otherwise treat qualified handicapped individuals without discrimination based upon their physical or mental handicap in all employment practices such as the following: employment, upgrading, demotion or transfer, recruitment, advertising, layoff or termination, rates of pay or other forms of compensation, and selection for training, including apprenticeship.

(b) The Contractor agrees to comply with the rules, regulations, and relevant orders of the Secretary of Labor issued pursuant to the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

(c) In the event of the Contractor's noncompliance with the requirements of this clause, actions for noncompliance may be taken in accordance with the rules, regulations, and relevant orders of the Secretary of Labor issued pursuant to the Act.

(d) The Contractor agrees to post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, notices in a form to be prescribed by the Director, Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, Department of Labor, provided by or through the Contracting Officer. Such notices shall state the Contractor's obligation under the law to take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified handicapped employees and applicants for employment, and the rights of applicants and employees.

(e) The Contractor will notify each labor union or representative of workers with which he/she has a collective bargaining agreement or other contract understanding, that the Contractor is bound by the terms of Section 503 of the Act and is committed to take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment physically and mentally handicapped individuals.

(f) The Contractor will include the provisions of this clause in every subcontract or purchase order of \$2,500 or more unless exempted by rules, regulations, or orders of the Secretary of Labor issued pursuant to Section 503 of the Act, so that such provision will be binding upon each subcontractor or vendor.

The Contractor will take such action with respect to any subcontract or purchase order as the Director, Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, may direct to enforce such provisions, including action for noncompliance.

#### Exhibit E

### EQUAL OPPORTUNITY

During the performance of this contract, the Contractor agrees as follows:

(a) The Contractor will not discriminate against any employee or applicant for employment because of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. The contractor will take affirmative action to ensure that applicants are employed, and that employees are treated during employment, without regard to their race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Such action shall include, but not be limited to, the following: employment, upgrading, demotion, transfer; recruitment or recruitment advertising; layoff or termination; rates of pay or other forms of compensation; and selection for training, including apprenticeship. The Contract agrees to post in conspicuous places, available to employees and applicants for employment, notices to be provided by the Contracting Officer setting forth the provision of this Equal Opportunity clause.

(b) The Contractor will, in all solicitations or advertisements for employees placed by or on behalf of the Contractor, state that all qualified applicants will receive consideration for employment without regard to race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

(c) The Contractor will send to each labor union representative of workers with which he/she has a collective bargaining agreement or other contract, a notice, to be provided by the agency Contracting Officer, advising the labor union or workers' representative of the Contractor's commitments under this Equal Opportunity clause, and shall post copies of the notice in conspicuous places available to employees and applicants for employment.

(d) The Contractor will comply with all provisions of Executive Order No. 11246 of September 24, 1965, as amended by Executive Order No. 11375 of October 13, 1967, and of the rules, regulations, and relevant orders of the Secretary of Labor.

(e) The Contractor will furnish all information and reports required by Executive Order No. 11246 of September 24, 1965, as amended by Executive Order No. 11375 of October 13, 1967, and by the rules, regulations, and orders of the Secretary of Labor, or pursuant thereto, and will permit access to his/her books, records, and accounts by the contracting agency and the Secretary of Labor for purposes of investigation to ascertain compliance with such rules, regulations, and orders.

(f) In the event of the Contractor's noncompliance with the Equal Opportunity clause of this contract or with any of the said rules, regulations, or orders, this contract may be cancelled, terminated, or suspended, in whole or in part, and the Contractor may be declared ineligible for further Government contracts in accordance with procedures authorized in Executive Order No. 11246 of September 24, 1965, as amended by Executive Order No. 11375 of October 13, 1967, or by rule, regulation, or order of the Secretary of Labor, or as otherwise provided by law.

(g) The Contractor will include the provisions of paragraphs (a) through (g) in every subcontract or purchase order unless exempted by rules, regulations, or orders of the Secretary of Labor issued pursuant to Section 204 of Executive Order No. 11246 of September 24, 1965, as amended by Executive Order No. 11375 of October 13, 1967, so that such provisions will be binding upon each subcontractor or vendor. The Contractor will take such action with respect to any subcontract or purchase order as the contracting agency may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance: Provided, however, that in the event of that the Contractor becomes involved in, or is threatened with, litigation with a subcontractor or vendor as a result of such direction by the contracting agency, the Contractor may request the United States to enter into such litigation to protect the interests of the United States.



## Appendix H

### Bylaws of Friends of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge, Inc.

#### ARTICLE I

Section 1. Name - The name of the corporation shall be Friends of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge, Inc.

Section 2. Location - The corporation shall have a post office box at the Newburyport, MA Post Office. It shall conduct business and meet at places within Essex County or elsewhere as determined by the Board of Directors.

Section 3. Fiscal Year - The fiscal year of the corporation shall begin on the first day of January and end on the last day of December in each year unless otherwise designated by the Board of Directors.

#### ARTICLE II

Friends of Parker River National Wildlife Refuge, Inc. is an independent, non-profit corporation dedicated to supporting the primary purposes for which the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge was established: For use as an inviolate sanctuary for migratory birds; for the protection of natural resources; for the development of incidental wildlife-oriented recreation where it does not interfere with the primary purposes of the Refuge.

The corporation shall promote the preservation of the natural and historical resources of the Refuge, foster its use and enjoyment by the public consistent with the protection and preservation of its environment, and engage in such educational, scientific and civic activities as will assist the management of the Refuge in carrying out its mandates. To accomplish these purposes, the corporation may solicit, receive, purchase, and borrow, with or without security, real and personal property, including funds by way of gifts, contributions and subscriptions, and administer, own, hold, convey, transfer, disburse, lend and sell the same for such charitable, scientific, literary and educational purposes as are permitted by section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of the United States as it now exists and as hereafter amended, and no assets of this corporation shall inure to the benefit of any private individual. Upon dissolution and winding up of this corporation, any remaining assets shall be transferred only to an organization having like charitable, scientific, literary and educational purposes as are permitted by section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of the United States. No assets shall be conveyed or distributed to any individual or substantial part of the activities of this corporation shall consist of carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, nor shall this corporation take part in any political campaign on behalf of any candidate for public office.

Notwithstanding any other provision of these By-Laws, the purposes for which this corporation is formed are exclusively charitable and educational within the meaning of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954. The corporation shall not carry on any other activities not permitted to be carried on (a) by a corporation exempt from federal income tax under section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corre

sponding section of any future federal tax code, or (b) by a corporation, contributions to which are tax deductible under section 170 (c) (2) of the Internal Revenue Code, or the corresponding section of any future federal tax code.

### ARTICLE III

#### Members

There shall be one class of members. All interested persons subscribing to the purposes of the corporation may become Members upon payment of annual dues in the amount established from time to time by the Board of Directors. Each Member shall be entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the Members. Dues are payable January 1 of each calendar year. Any member whose annual dues remain unpaid for 90 days after January 1 of any calendar year shall be deemed to have resigned upon the due date thereof. Any member may resign by filing a written resignation with the Secretary. The Board of Directors, by affirmative vote of a majority of all Members of the Board, may suspend or expel a member for cause.

### ARTICLE IV

#### Meeting of Members

Section 1. Annual Meeting - The annual meeting of the Members shall be held in January of each year at such time and place in Essex County, MA or such other place as the Board of directors may select for the purpose of electing a Board of Directors and for the transaction of such other business as may come before the meeting.

Section 2. Special Meetings - Special meetings of the Members may be called at any time by the President of the corporation and shall be called upon written request of any 3 members of the Board of Directors or not less than 10 Members of the corporation.

Section 3. Notice - Written notice stating the date, time, place and purpose of any meeting shall be sent to the Members not less than ten (10) nor more than forty-five (45) days before the date of such meeting.

Section 4. Voting - Ten members shall constitute a quorum. When a quorum is present at any meeting, the vote of a majority of the Members shall, except where a larger vote may be required by law, or these by-laws, decide any question brought before the meeting. The vote of each member must be cast in person. There shall be no voting by proxy.

### ARTICLE V

#### Board of Directors and Committees

Section 1. General - The property, business and affairs of the corporation shall be managed by a Board of Directors. Directors shall be members of the corporation. The President, Vice-Presidents, Secretary and Treasurer shall be elected from among the Board of Directors.

Section 2. Number and Election - There shall be nine Directors, who shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the corporation by a vote of the members to serve for a period of one year, or until their successors shall qualify.

Section 3. Resignation and Removal - Any Director may resign by delivering his/her written resignation to the corporation at its mailing address or to the President or Secretary or the corporation. Such resignation shall be effective upon receipt unless it is specified to be effective at some later time. Any Director may be removed from office with or without cause by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members present at any annual or special meeting of the members at which a quorum of the members entitled to a vote is present. A Director who ceases to be a member of the corporation shall thereupon cease to be a director.

Section 4. Vacancies - Any vacancy on the Board of Directors caused by death, resignation, disqualification or any other cause, may be filled for the unexpired term by a vote of the remaining directors (though less than a quorum), and each director so chosen shall hold office until the expiration of the unexpired term for which he or she was so chosen and until his or her successor shall have been duly elected and shall qualify.

Section 5. Meetings - Regular meetings of the Board of Directors may be held without call or notice at such places and times as the directors may from time to time determine, provided that any director who is absent when such determination is made shall be given notice thereof. The annual meeting of the directors shall be held at the same place as the annual meeting of the members or the special meeting held in lieu thereof, following or as part of such meeting of the members, or at the same time and place as the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors.

Special Meetings of the directors may be held at any time and place designated in a call by the chair or the treasurer or two or more directors. All directors shall receive notice of the date, time, place and purpose of any special meetings at least two days in advance of such meeting.

Section 6. Quorum and Action - A majority of the Board of Directors then in office shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of any business at any meeting of the Board. When a quorum is present at any meeting, the vote of a majority of the Directors present may take any action of behalf of the Board, except to the extent that a larger number is required by law, or by and Articles of Organization or by these By-Laws.

Any action required or permitted to be taken at any meeting of the Board of Directors may be taken without a vote if all of the Directors then in office consent to the action by telephone and later file a written consent with the records of the meetings of the Board of Directors. Such written consent shall be treated, for all purposes, as votes at a duly convened meeting of the Board of Directors.

Section 7. Committees - There shall be a nominating committee consisting of three (3) members elected by the Board of Directors. The terms of the members of the nominating committee shall be two (2) year terms which are staggered so that the term of one member shall expire each year. The nominating committee shall propose for elec

tion at the annual meeting of members candidates for the Board of Directors. The Directors may from time to time establish such other standing or ad/hoc committees as they shall determine to be necessary or appropriate for the conduct of the corporation's activities.

## ARTICLE VI

### Officers

Section 1. Officers - The officers of the corporation shall be a President, two Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, a Secretary and such other officers as the directors may deem necessary. Any two or more offices may be held by the same person except the offices of President and Secretary.

Section 2. Election - The officers of the corporation shall be elected annually by the Directors at the Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors. Each officer shall hold office until the next Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors and until his/her successor shall have been elected and qualified.

Section 3. Vacancies - A vacancy in any office because of death, resignation, disqualification or otherwise may be filled by the Board of Directors for the unexpired portion of the term of said office.

Section 4. Resignation and Removal - Any officer may resign by delivering his/her written resignation to the corporation at its mailing address or to the President or Secretary and such resignation shall be effective upon receipt unless it is specified to be effective at some later time. The Directors may remove any officer with or without cause by a vote of a majority of the Directors then in office, provided that an officer may be removed for cause only after reasonable notice and an opportunity to be heard by the Board of Directors, and such notice shall contain a statement of the causes assigned for such proposed removal.

Section 5. President - The President shall be the principal executive officer of the corporation and shall, subject to the direction of the Board of Directors, supervise and control all of the business and affairs of the corporation. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Members and of the Board of Directors. The President shall have such other powers and duties as are usually incident to such office and as may be vested in him/her by these By-Laws or by the Directors.

Section 6. Vice-President - In the absence of the President or in the event of the President's inability or refusal to act, a Vice-President shall perform the duties of the President and, when so acting, shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the President. A Vice-President shall perform such other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him/her by the President or by the Board of Directors.

Section 7. Treasurer - The Treasurer shall, subject to the direction and control of the Board of Directors, have general charge of the financial affairs of the corporation and shall keep full and accurate books of account in accordance with such standards as the

Directors may from time to time determine. The Treasurer shall render a report of the financial affairs of the corporation at each Annual Meeting of the Members and at such other times as the Directors shall determine. The Treasurer shall maintain custody of all funds, securities and valuable documents of the corporation, except as the Directors may otherwise provide. The Treasurer shall have such other powers and duties as are usually incident to his/her office and as may be vested in him/her by these By-laws or from time to time designated by the Directors.

Section 8. Secretary - The Secretary shall give such notices of meetings of Members and Directors as are required by these By-laws and shall keep a record of all the meetings of Members and Directors. The Secretary shall have such other powers and duties as are usually incident to his/her office and as may be vested in him/her by these By-laws or by the Directors. In the absence of the Secretary from any meeting of Members or Directors a temporary secretary, designated by the person presiding at the meeting, shall perform the duties of the Secretary.

## ARTICLE VII

### Books and Records

Section 1. Maintenance of Records - The corporation shall keep correct and complete books and records of account, minutes of the proceedings of its Members, Board of Directors and Committees, and a record giving the names and addresses of the Members entitled to vote. All books and records of the corporation may be inspected by any Member for any proper purpose at any reasonable time.

Section 2. Execution of Instruments - The Board of Directors may authorize any officer(s) or agent(s) of the corporation, in addition to the officers so authorized by these By-laws, to enter into any contract or execute and deliver any instrument in the name of and on behalf of the corporation. Such authority may be general or may be limited to specific instances.

All checks, drafts or orders for the payment of money, notes or other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of the corporation shall be signed by such officer(s) or agent(s) of the corporation, and in such manner, as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the Board of Directors. In the absence of such determination by the Board, such instrument shall be signed by the Treasurer of the corporation.

Section 3. Deposit and Acceptance of Funds - All funds of the corporation shall be deposited to the credit of the corporation in such banks, trust companies or other depositories as the Board of Directors may select. The Board of Directors may accept any contribution, gift, bequest or device on behalf of the corporation, for the general purposes of the corporation or for any specific purpose of the corporation.

## ARTICLE VIII

## Liability

Officers and directors shall not be liable to the corporation or its members for monetary damages for breach of fiduciary duty as an officer or director notwithstanding any provision of law imposing such liability; except that the liability of an officer or director shall not be limited or eliminated for any breach of the officer's or director's duty of loyalty to the corporation or its members; for acts or omissions not in good faith or which involve intentional misconduct or a knowing violation of law; or for any transaction from which the officer or director derived an improper personal benefit.

## ARTICLE IX

## Indemnification

The corporation shall, to the extent legally permissible, indemnify each person who may serve or who has served at any time as a director or officer of the corporation, or in any other capacity thereof, or of any of its subsidiaries, or who at the request of the corporation may serve or has served as a director, officer or trustee of, or in a similar capacity with, another organization, against all expenses and liabilities, including counsel fees reasonably incurred by or imposed upon such person in connection with any proceeding in which he may become involved by reason of his serving or having served in such capacity (other than a proceeding voluntarily initiated by such person unless he is successful on the merits, the proceeding was authorized by a majority of the full Board or the proceeding seeks a declaratory judgment regarding his own conduct); provided that no indemnification shall be provided for any such person with respect to any matter as to which he have acted in good faith in the reasonable belief that his action was in the best interests of the corporation. Such indemnification may, to the extent authorized by the corporation, include payment by the corporation of expenses incurred in defending a civil or criminal action or proceeding in advance of the final disposition of such action or proceeding, upon receipt of an undertaking by the person indemnified to repay such payment if he shall be adjudicated to be not entitled to indemnification under this Article, which undertaking may be accepted without regard to the financial ability of such person to make repayment.

A person entitled to indemnification hereunder whose duties include service or responsibilities as a fiduciary with respect to a subsidiary or other organization, including an employee benefit plan, shall be deemed to have acted in good faith in the reasonable belief that his action was in the best interests of the corporation if he acted in good faith in the reasonable belief that his action was in the best interests of such subsidiary or organization or of the participants or beneficiaries of, or other persons with interests in, such subsidiary or organization to whom he has a fiduciary duty.

The payment of any indemnification shall be conclusively deemed authorized by the corporation under this Article, and each director of the corporation approving such payment shall be wholly protected, if:

(1) The payment has been approved or ratified (a) by a majority vote of quorum of the directors consisting of persons who are at that time parties of the proceeding, (b) by a majority vote of a committee of two or more directors who are not at that time parties to the proceeding and are selected for this purpose by the full Board (in which selection Directors who are parties may participate), or (c) by a majority vote of a quorum of the members of directors, voting as a single class, which quorum shall consist of members who are not at that time parties to the proceeding; or

(2) The action is taken in reliance upon the opinion of independent legal counsel (who may be counsel to the corporation) appointed for the purpose by vote of the directors or in the manner specified in clauses (a), (b) or (c) or subparagraph (1); or

(3) The directors have otherwise acted in accordance with the standard of conduct applied under Chapter 180 of the Massachusetts General Laws.

The indemnification provided hereunder shall inure to the benefit of the heirs, executors and administrators of a director, officer or other person entitled to indemnification hereunder.

The right of indemnification under this Article shall be in addition to and not exclusive of all other rights to which such director or officer or other persons may be entitled. Nothing contained in this Article shall affect any rights to indemnification to which corporation employees or agents, other than directors and officers, and other persons entitled to indemnification hereunder may be entitled by contract or otherwise under law.

## ARTICLE X

### Amendments to By-Laws

These By-Laws may be altered, amended or repealed, in whole or in part, by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members present at any Meeting of the Members at which a quorum is present, provided that the notice of the meeting contains a statement of the proposed alteration or amendment. The Directors may also make, amend or repeal these By-Laws in whole or in part and shall give written notice of such action to the membership not later than the time of giving notice of the next Meeting of Members. Any such alteration, amendment or repeal by the Directors must then be ratified at the next Meeting of Members by the affirmative vote of a majority of the members present, provided that a quorum is present at such meeting in order to be valid. Notwithstanding the above provisions of this Article X, any alteration, amendment or repeal of a By-Law by the directors as provided for in this Article X shall be valid and given full force and effect until the next Meeting of members.





## Appendix I

### Friends of Minnesota Valley Strategic Plan 1994-1995

#### MISSION STATEMENT

The Friends of the Minnesota Valley is a nonprofit citizens organization dedicated to conserving the natural and cultural resources of the lower Minnesota River Valley, including the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge between Fort Snelling State Park and Jordan, Minnesota.

#### GOALS

Conserve the integrity of the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

Provide education to residents of communities adjacent to the Valley towards wildlife conservation goals.

Provide wildlife conservation and environmental education to governmental agencies concerned with the Valley.

Work to complete land acquisition in the Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge.

Provide advocacy for the Refuge as needed.

Support efforts of other environmental advocacy groups whenever possible.

To continue to its mission and meet its goals the Friends have created four (4) committees: Development (D), Heritage Registry (HR), Issues (I), Outreach (O), Nominating (N) and Executive (E). These committees have developed the following program objectives which will guide the activities and efforts of the Friends for the program year October 1994 through December 1995.

#### Development Committee

*Create a development committee to develop a fundraising strategy and goals for the Friends by December 1994 and to supervise fundraising activities throughout the year.*  
(D)

Meet McKnight challenge grant by March 30, 1995. (D)

Heritage Registry Committee

Develop a Business Program as part of the Heritage Registry.

Agreement written and brochure reprinted by December 1994.

Have contacted seven businesses by December 1994 with four agreeing to be registrants.

Have contacted 20 businesses by December 1995 with 10 agreeing to be registrants.

Provide ongoing assistance, direction, and support to the Executive Director.

Write performance review guidelines, conduct annual performance review, and review salary and benefits by December, 1994.

Support and expand the Heritage Registry.

Support and evaluate workshop for "Friends-type" groups on Oct. 4, 1994.

Evaluate Heritage Registry in Dec. 1994 and set measurable objectives for 1995.

Make initial contact with all homeowners within the boundaries of the Friends by Dec. 1995.

Heritage Registry Honor Roll plaque completed by Dec. 1995.

### **Issues Committee**

*Support the Refuge by working for land acquisition within the authorized boundaries; maintenance of the refuge, and staffing.*

Meet with Dept. of Interior personnel in December 1994 and 1995 to promote Friends' vision for the refuge.

Host a meeting with local congressional aides in April or May 1995.

Visit Washington DC in February, 1995 to meet with USFWS and DOI personnel regarding the refuge needs.

Address threats to the valley as they arise.

This is ongoing and may involve letter writing, presentations, and/or meetings.

**Outreach Committee**

*Expand membership to 300 by December, 1995.*

Contact members who do not renew their memberships.

Increase distribution of Friends literature.

Increase number and variety of Friends member events to at least 4 per year.

Hold annual spring event for Legislative representatives and aides.

Invite members to visit a Registrant's property. (Coordinate with HR committee.)

Sell mugs and/or T-shirts to increase Friends' visibility.

Create combined quarterly newsletter with the refuge, and refuge volunteers and have it "on-line" by January, 1995.

Build a program of outreach to community groups.

Develop a Friends presentation and present to the Board for its input in February, 1995.

Conduct 6 presentations to city councils, committees, and local business leaders by December, 1995.

Participate in local events by displaying Friends' display board.

Assist new "friends-type" groups with start-up information in the form of written information packets and/or seminars.

Network with other environmental groups in the Valley by participating in their events and inviting them to our meetings.

Conduct a storm sewer stenciling project in communities bordering the MN River in accordance with the Metropolitan Council grant.



## Appendix J

### How Do We Safeguard Against Conflict of Interest?\*

When the personal or professional concerns of a board member or a staff member affect his or her ability to put the welfare of the organization before personal benefit, conflict of interest exists. Nonprofit board members are likely to be affiliated with many organizations in their communities, both on a professional and a personal basis, so it is not unusual for actual or potential conflict of interest to arise.

#### **Why must we be concerned about conflict of interest?**

Board service in the nonprofit sector carries with it important ethical obligations. Nonprofits serve the broad public good, and when board members fail to exercise reasonable care in their oversight of the organization, they are not living up to their public trust. In addition, board members have a legal responsibility to assure the prudent management of an organization's resources. In fact, they may be held liable for the organization's actions. A 1974 court decision known as the "Sibley Hospital case" set a precedent by confirming that board members can be held legally liable for conflict of interest because it constitutes a breach of their fiduciary responsibility.

#### **Does conflict of interest involve only financial accountability?**

No. Conflict of interest relates broadly to ethical behavior, which includes not just legal issues but considerations in every aspect of governance. A recent statement by Independent Sector describes three levels of ethical behavior:

1. obeying the law;
2. decisions where the right action is clear, but one is tempted to take a different course; and
3. decisions that require a choice among competing options.

The third level of behavior can pose especially difficult ethical dilemmas for nonprofit board members.

#### **What can we do to prevent conflict of interest situations?**

Self monitoring is the best preventative measure. Institute a system of checks and balances to circumvent actual or potential conflict of interest, beginning with well defined operating policies on all matters that might lead to conflict. Most important, create a carefully written conflict of interest policy based on the needs and circumstances of the organization. Ask each board and staff member to agree in writing to uphold the policy. A conflict of interest policy should be reviewed regularly as part of board self assessment.

**What should be included in a conflict of interest policy?**

A policy on conflict of interest has three essential elements:

**1. FULL DISCLOSURE.**

Board members and staff members in decision-making roles should make known their connections with groups doing business with the organization. This information should be provided annually.

**2. BOARD MEMBER ABSTENTION FROM DISCUSSION AND VOTING.**

Board members who have an actual or potential conflict of interest should not participate in discussions or vote on matters affecting transactions between the organization and the other group.

**3. STAFF MEMBER ABSTENTION FROM DECISION-MAKING.**

Staff members who have an actual or potential conflict should not be substantively involved in decision-making affecting such transactions.

**What are some examples of actual and potential conflict of interest?**

- Organization policy requires competitive bidding on purchases of more than \$1,000, but a printing firm owned by a board member's spouse receives the \$25,000 contract for the annual report and no other bids are solicited.
- A board member serves on two boards in the community and finds himself in the position of approaching the same donors on behalf of both organizations.
- A staff member receives an honorarium for conducting a workshop for another group in the organization's field of interest.

**Should an organization contract with a board member for professional services, such as legal counsel or accounting?**

Attorneys, accountants, and other professionals can contribute valuable expertise to a board. Due to the potential for conflict of interest, their contributions should be voluntary. At the very least, a board member who is associated with a firm competing for a contract should abstain from discussion and voting in the selection process. If a competitive bidding process results in the selection of that board member's firm, he or she should disclose the affiliation and abstain from voting on future board actions connected with that firm's contract with the organization.

\*From: [www.ncb.org](http://www.ncb.org) (National center for Nonprofit Boards) reprinted with permission.