



**Florida Department of Environmental Protection
CITIZEN SUPPORT ORGANIZATION
2025 LEGISLATIVE REPORT
(pursuant to Section 20.058 Florida Statutes)**

Citizen Support Organization (CSO) Name: Aquatic Preserve Alliance of Central Florida, Inc.

Mailing Address: 9710 East Dewey Robbins Road Howey in the Hills Florida 34737

Telephone Number: (407) 967-7932

Website Address (*required if applicable*): <https://aquaticpreservealliance.org>

☒ Check to confirm your Code of Ethics is posted conspicuously on your website.

Statutory Authority:

Section 20.2551, F.S., Citizen support organizations; use of property; audit; public records; partnerships. In summary, the statute specifies the organizational requirements, operational parameters, duties of a CSO to support the Department of Environmental Protection (Department), or individual units of the Department, use of Department property, audit requirements, public records requirements, and authorizes public-private partnerships to enhance lands managed by the Department.

Section 20.058, F.S., Citizen support and direct-support organizations. In summary, the statute specifies the organizational requirements to submit an annual report each year for each designated CSO and to post that information on the Departments website.

YOUR MISSION AND LAST CALENDAR YEAR'S PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

CSO's Mission:

The Aquatic Preserve Alliance of Central Florida, Inc. (Alliance) mission is to promote and support charitable, educational, and scientific activities that directly and indirectly benefit the Aquatic Preserves of Central Florida. The organization is dedicated to raising awareness and educating the public about the Aquatic Preserves ecosystems

Describe Last Calendar Year's Results Obtained:

- The Alliance President met weekly and monthly via telephone, Zoom, or in person with the Aquatic Preserve (AP) Manager until her retirement August 31, 2024. The Alliance Secretary, other board members, and technical advisors met bimonthly. In September 2024, after retirement from her position as the AP Manager, Barbara Howell was nominated and unanimously approved by the Board to serve as Vice President for the Alliance. 54 volunteer hours.
- Welcomed the new AP Manager, Bilal Ansari, who was busy his first few months dealing with well water and decking repairs at the AP office.
- AP Library and historical documents – Alliance reviewed materials in the AP library at the office, discarded materials that were not related to the AP or were damaged by old age or rodent activity. 78 volunteer hours.
- Aquatic Preserve Society (APS) monthly meetings were attended by the Alliance President, who also serves as the APS Vice President and recorded several meetings in the absence of an APS Secretary. Barbara Howell was elected to fill the APS Secretary position during the October 2024 APS meeting. 22 volunteer hours.
- Assisted with the Aquatic Preserve's and the Wekiva Wild & Scenic River System's booths again at the two-day Manatee Festival in Orange City. The annual festival has become so large that it continues to utilize buses to transport the 8,500-plus visitors between Blue Spring State Park and nearby Valentine Park. Alliance members volunteered for 30 hours.

- Participated in Lake County's Eco Expo, an environmental symposium held in partnership with Lake Square Mall in Leesburg. The event featured speakers and tabling with over 25 other educational and environmental groups and local government entities. Alliance volunteers staffed a table; 34 hours.
- Alliance President continued to serve as liaison for the AP and on the Executive Committee for monthly Friends of the Wekiva River (FOWR) Board meetings. Assisted FOWR Board with review of several development projects that would impact the Wekiva River Protection Area. 24 volunteer hours.
- Freshwater Research and Education Center (R&E) – Board members and Alliance Technical Advisors attended a site inspection of the 170-acre parcel, recently purchased by the City of DeBary, which lies within the boundary of the St. Johns River reach of the AP. The City is interested in partnering with the Alliance to establish a Freshwater R&E Center on the northern three acres of the site. The City plans to provide sewer and water to the site. The Alliance Board continued to coordinate with the City throughout the year as they worked on implementing their plans to develop a trail and other amenities. Volunteer hours 36.
- Pavilion at Katie's Landing on the Wekiva River – Alliance President continued to serve on FOWR's Pavilion Committee. Major accomplishments included submitting and obtaining the St. Johns River Water Management District permit for the Pavilion, welcoming and working with the new Wekiva Basin State Park Manager on the project and starting Seminole County permitting. The total budget, over \$100,000, has been raised. Volunteer hours 50.
- Retirement Party for Outgoing Aquatic Preserve Manager – assisted with planning for the August 31, 2024 Retirement Party for Barbara Howell. Over 100 colleagues, friends, and family attended the event. Bluegrass band Black Water Creek and harpist Michelle Jamesson provided musical entertainment. As mentioned above, Barbara was subsequently "repurposed" as Vice President of the Alliance and Secretary of the APS.

Describe the CSO's Plans for the Next Three Calendar Years:

- * Support Aquatic Preserve volunteer resource management and education/outreach activities; continue to conduct fundraising to support aquatic preserve activities.
- * Continue to coordinate with the City of DeBary who has offered a 3-acre location for the Freshwater Research and Education Center which is part of their 170-acre Alexander Island Park on the St. Johns River reach of the Aquatic Preserve. Develop a Grants Package for funding solicitation, coordinate stakeholder planning committees, and when developed, partner with the Aquatic Preserve program on education, research and field trips at the site.
- * Participate in inter-agency working groups and support local environmental organizations on projects and issues which affect the Aquatic Preserves and surrounding areas.
- * Continue to serve on Friends of the Wekiva River's Pavilion Committee and support efforts to construct a covered pavilion for public use at Katie's Landing on the Wekiva River reach of the Aquatic Preserve.
- * Enhance and update our website.
- * Expand general membership and seek qualified Board members.

CSO's LAST CALENDAR YEAR STATISTICS:

Total Number of CSO General Membership: 59

Total Number of Board of Directors: 6

Total Volunteer Hours for the Board of Directors: 370

ORCP & CSO RELATIONSHIP:

(Do not duplicate by describing accomplishments and contributions in the summary. Brag in the above Results Obtained.)

Below, describe the relationship.

AP Manager's Comments on the CSO & ORCP Relationship and Support:

Provide your perspective on

- Changing developments of the managed area provided by the CSO.
 - Effectiveness of the organization in fulfilling their purpose to support the managed area(s).
 - Effectiveness of the Board of Directors in completing their Annual Program Plan.
 - The relationship between the ORCP team and CSO. What went well? Are there areas of improvement?
-
- In the last 4 months of calendar year 2024, the Aquatic Preserve Alliance of Central Florida worked alongside our office in our outreach program, contacting the public and providing information to stakeholders about the Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection and the Central Florida Aquatic Preserves primary missions.
 - In the coming year, I look forward to an increase in coordination and participation to provide the Aquatic Preserve Office with volunteers and support towards the functionality of the Departments stated mission. To provide safe and reasonable recreational access to the public, and to uphold The Departments' conservation of the Aquatic Preserves through responsible stewardship.

CSO President's Comments on the CSO & ORCP Relationship and Support:

Provide your perspective on the relationship between the ORCP and CSO. What went well? Are there areas of improvement?

The Aquatic Preserve Alliance of Central Florida (Alliance) and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Office of Resilience and Coastal Protection (ORCP) work well together to accomplish mutual goals. As described above, the Alliance frequently worked closely with Aquatic Preserve (AP) Manager on numerous projects and activities until her retirement in August 2024. The Pavilion Project is an excellent example of teamwork and partnerships with the Friends of Wekiva, the AP Manager, the Florida Park Service, and the Alliance. This project will greatly enhance public use and safety at Katie's Landing, an addition to the Lower Wekiva River Preserve State Park along the Wekiva River, by providing a 24 x 44 covered pavilion. Two Alliance Board members serve on the Board of the Aquatic Preserve Society (APS). The Alliance President serves as the Vice President of the APS, and as of October 2024, the Alliance VP serves as Secretary of the APS. The monthly teleconference meetings with APS are another example of good communication and maintaining rapport between the Alliance, APS and ORCP. We look forward to working with the new AP Manager in 2025.

SUMMARIZE FINANCIAL ACTIVITY FOR LAST CALENDAR YEAR, DIRECT AP(S) SUPPORT & REVENUES: Program Services are costs related to providing your organization's programs or services in accordance with your mission. Describe and provide expenses that directly support the AP(s). For established nonprofit organizations, program service expenses generally represent most of the overall expenses of the organization. For the last calendar year provide the total \$ for each that apply.

Building improvement, construction, or renovations	\$
Cultural resources (e.g., historic structure restoration/ renovation)	\$
Natural resources (e.g., native plants, natural lands restoration)	\$
Maintenance equipment (e.g., mowers, chippers, blowers, chainsaws)	\$
Other facilities and landscape maintenance	\$
Vehicles (e.g., trucks/cars, UTVs, golf carts, accessible devices, etc.)	\$
Amenities (e.g., water fountains, benches, picnic tables, recreational equipment, kiosks etc.)	\$
ORCP employees or volunteers support (e.g., interns, training, uniforms, awards, or recognition)	\$
Big ticket visitor center exhibits or interpretation updates	\$
Preserve exhibits, displays, signage	\$
Preserve publications, brochures, maps, etc.	\$
Programing/interpretation support material purchases	\$
Other program services	\$ 204
Total Program Service Expenses	\$ 204

Visitor Services Revenue are revenues and the resources generated from fundraising on preserve property.

Preserve gift shops, craft stores, and concession sales	\$
Merchandise sales (e.g., plants, firewood, ice, t-shirts, hats, etc.)	\$
Programs and Special Events (e.g., fundraising workshops, seasonal events, concerts, etc.)	\$
Vending (e.g., drink machines, penny press, laundry, Wi-Fi, etc.)	\$
Rentals (e.g., bikes, canoe, kayak, SUPs, etc.)	\$
In-preserve donation boxes	\$
Other visitor services revenue	\$ 425
Total Visitor Services Revenue	\$ 425

NET ASSETS **\$ 11,462.44**

Organizations end of last year's Total Assets minus Total Liabilities. This is not the above's Visitor Service Revenue minus Program Service Expenses.

CSO AUDIT THRESHOLD:

Last Calendar Year's Total Expenses (including grants)..... **\$ 204**

Are the CSO's annual total expenses \$300,000 including grants? Then Section 215.981(2), Florida Statute requires an independent CPA audit using Government Audit Standards ([U.S. GAO Yellow Book](#)). The audit is **due by September 1** (9 months after the CSO's calendar year ends) to the Florida Auditor General and to the Department.


CONFIRM ATTACHMENTS:

☒ Code of Ethics

☒ The most recent Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 990, 990-EZ, or 990-N receipt. All IRS Form 990's must be complete with Part III Program Service and all appropriate Schedules (A, O, and others as appropriate). If filing an IRS extension, attach the IRS 8868 receipt and the most recent complete 990 and schedules.

2025 CSO Legislative Report Acknowledgment

This information is complete to the best of my knowledge pursuant to Section 20.058 Florida Statutes

Signature: 

Print name: Deborah Shelley, CSO President
Aquatic Preserve Alliance of Central Florida, Inc.
Date: 28 May 2025

Signature: 

Print name: Bilal Ansari, AP Manager
Date: June 2, 2025

The Aquatic Preserve Alliance of Central Florida, Inc.

CODE OF ETHICS

PREAMBLE

- (1) It is essential to the proper conduct and operation of The Aquatic Preserve Alliance of Central Florida, Inc. (herein "CSO") that its board members, officers, and employees be independent and impartial and that their position not be used for private gain. Therefore, the Florida Legislature in Section 112.3251, Florida Statute (Fla. Stat.), requires that the law protect against any conflict of interest and establish standards for the conduct of CSO board members, officers, and employees in situations where conflicts may exist.
- (2) It is hereby declared to be the policy of the state that no CSO board member, officer, or employee shall have any interest, financial or otherwise, direct or indirect, or incur any obligation of any nature which is in substantial conflict with the proper discharge of his or her duties for the CSO. To implement this policy and strengthen the faith and confidence of the people in Citizen Support Organizations, there is enacted a code of ethics setting forth standards of conduct required of The Aquatic Preserve Alliance of Central Florida, Inc. board members, officers, and employees in the performance of their official duties.

STANDARDS

The following standards of conduct are enumerated in Chapter 112, Fla. Stat., and are required by Section 112.3251, Fla. Stat., to be observed by CSO board members, officers, and employees.

1. Prohibition of Solicitation or Acceptance of Gifts

No CSO board member, officer, or employee shall solicit or accept anything of value to the recipient, including a gift, loan, reward, promise of future employment, favor, or service, based upon any understanding that the vote, official action, or judgment of the CSO board member, officer, or employee would be influenced thereby.

2. Prohibition of Accepting Compensation Given to Influence a Vote

No CSO board member, officer, or employee shall accept any compensation, payment, or thing of value when the person knows, or, with reasonable care, should know that it was given to influence a vote or other action in which the CSO board member, officer, or employee was expected to participate in his or her official capacity.

3. Salary and Expenses

No CSO board member or officer shall be prohibited from voting on a matter affecting his or her salary, expenses, or other compensation as a CSO board member or officer, as provided by law.

4. Prohibition of Misuse of Position

A CSO board member, officer, or employee shall not corruptly use or attempt to use one's official position or any property or resource which may be within one's trust, or perform official duties, to secure a special privilege, benefit, or exemption.

5. Prohibition of Misuse of Privileged Information

No CSO board member, officer, or employee shall disclose or use information not available to members of the general public and gained by reason of one's official position for one's own personal gain or benefit or for the personal gain or benefit of any other person or business entity.

6. Employment Restrictions

A person who has been elected to any CSO board or office or who is employed by a CSO may not personally represent another person or entity for compensation before the governing body of the CSO of which he or she was a board member, officer, or employee for a period of two years after he or she vacates that office or employment position.

7. Prohibition of Employees Holding Office

No person may be, at one time, both a CSO employee and a CSO board member at the same time.

8. Requirements to Abstain From Voting

A CSO board member or officer shall not vote in official capacity upon any measure which would affect his or her special private gain or loss, or which he or she knows would affect the special gain or any principal by whom the board member or officer is retained. When abstaining, the CSO board member or officer, prior to the vote being taken, shall make every reasonable effort to disclose the nature of his or her interest as a public record in a memorandum filed with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting, who shall incorporate the memorandum in the minutes. If it is not possible for the CSO board member or officer to file a memorandum before the vote, the memorandum must be filed with the person responsible for recording the minutes of the meeting no later than 15 days after the vote.

9. Failure to Observe CSO Code of Ethics

Failure of a CSO board member, officer, or employee to observe the Code of Ethics may result in the removal of that person from their position. Further, failure of the CSO to observe the Code of Ethics may result in the Florida Department of Environmental Protection terminating its Agreement with the CSO.



Confirmation

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Your Form 990-N(e-Postcard) has been submitted to the IRS

- **Organization Name:** AQUATIC PRESERVE ALLIANCE OF CENTRAL FLORIDA INC
- **EIN:** 472140025
- **Tax Year:** 2024
- **Tax Year Start Date:** 01-01-2024
- **Tax Year End Date:** 12-31-2024
- **Submission ID:** 10065520250928696274
- **Filing Status Date:** 04-02-2025
- **Filing Status:** Pending

Note: [Print](#) a copy of this filing for your records. Once you leave this page, you will not be able to do so.

MANAGE FORM 990-N SUBMISSIONS