



Florida Department of Environmental Protection

**CITIZEN SUPPORT ORGANIZATION  
2015 REPORT  
IMPLEMENTATION OF 20.058 F.S.**

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Citizen Support Organization (CSO) Name: Aquatic Preserve Society, Inc.

Mailing Address: 2600 South Adams St., #5969  
Tallahassee, FL 32314-5969

Telephone Number: (850)962-9901 Website Address (if applicable): <http://aquaticpreservesociety.weebly.com/>

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.

Brief Description of the CSO's Mission:

"The Aquatic Preserve Society (APS) is a non-profit advancing Florida's Aquatic Preserves managed by the Florida Coastal Office. Our mission is to protect, conserve and restore these unique natural Florida resources through public awareness, stewardship and support."

Brief Description of the CSO's Results Obtained:

During the past year:

The Aquatic Preserve Society (APS) held its organizational meeting.

Applied for and received corporate status.

Developed and approved Bylaws.

Entered into an operational agreement with FDEP.

Adopted a board of directors and officers.

Designed and adopted a logo.

Established a web site.

Recruited members.

Collected dues and established a bank account.

Applied for and received IRS section 501(c)3 non-profit status.

Held an annual members meeting.

Board and organization members attended FDEP Ocean's Day training, scheduled and completed meetings with legislators on Ocean's Day at the state capital.

Submitted the annual Florida corporation report.

Initiated work on developing and adopting a Code of Ethics.

Initiated work on long term strategic planning.

Brief Description of the CSO's Plans for Next Three Fiscal Years:

The APS will continue to solicit membership and to support and encourage formation of local citizen organizations to support Florida's aquatic preserves. The APS is developing a manual to guide local CSO chapters in their formation and operation. The APS expects to receive funds and to disperse them in cooperation with the appropriate aquatic preserve and in a manner benefitting that aquatic preserve.

- Copy of the CSO's Code of Ethics attached (*Model provided; see CSO 2014 instructions*)

The Society will vote on adoption of a Code of Ethics at its next meeting (6/24/2015).

- Certify the CSO has completed and provided to the Department the organization's most recent Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form 990, 990-EZ, or 990-N/Annual Financial Statement

Not due until after June 30, 2015.

## Code of Ethics

### AQUATIC PRESERVE SOCIETY, INC. CODE OF ETHICS

#### PREAMBLE

- (1) It is essential to the proper conduct and operation of the Aquatic Preserve Society (herein "APS") 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 APS 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 APS 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 APS. 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 APS 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 APS board members, officers, and employees.

##### **1. Prohibition of Solicitation or Acceptance of Gifts**

No APS 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 APS board member, officer, or employee would be influenced thereby.

##### **2. Prohibition of Accepting Compensation Given to Influence a Vote**

No APS 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 APS board member, officer, or employee was expected to participate in his or her official capacity.

##### **3. Salary and Expenses**

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

## **Code of Ethics**

### **4. Prohibition of Misuse of Position**

An APS 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 APS 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. Post-Office/Employment Restrictions**

A person who has been elected to any APS board or office or who is employed by an APS may not personally represent another person or entity for compensation before the governing body of the APS 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 an APS employee and an APS board member at the same time.

### **8. Requirements to Abstain From Voting**

An APS 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 APS 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 APS 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 APS Code of Ethics**

Failure of an APS 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 APS to observe the Code of Ethics may result in the Florida Department of Environmental Protection terminating its Agreement with the APS.