



Florida Department of Environmental Protection

CITIZEN SUPPORT ORGANIZATION 2016 REPORT IMPLEMENTATION OF 20.058 F.S.

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:

A more regular meeting schedule was desired. The APS will meet by teleconference on the fourth Wednesday of each month at 4:30.

Clyde Butcher has donated the Living Waters Photography exhibit to the Society. The Board decided the exhibit will be retained through the Estero Bay 50th year celebration in December and will be exhibited there. Afterwards the exhibit will be sold either as a whole or individually.

The one year terms of Board members Taylor Phillips, Tani Parkinson and Karrie Jones have expired. Dean Barber and Gary Lytton were nominated and approved as new Board members with two year terms. A motion was made to retain the existing slate of officers and approved unanimously. They are: Liz Donley – President, Terri Cain – Vice President and Larry Nall – Secretary/Treasurer

A presentation on the Aquatic Preserve Society was made to the Aquatic Preserve managers at their meeting at Apalachicola.

A society representative attended the Oceans Day reception at the Capital and manned a Society booth the next day.

The president and secretary-treasurer were interviewed by a DEP auditor. The formation, goals and finances of the Society discussed. The only finding was that the Treasurer has too little oversight in financial matters. In response, a formatted Profit Loss statement will be prepared for each meeting and the Vice President will log into the online checking account and verify that the balances and transactions are as reported.

The APS agreed to hold donations supporting the Coastal Zone Management Meeting in Tallahassee. Donations from other CSOs were received and support of the meeting was funded.

The APS voted to manage funds received from an ecotourism program involving kayak rentals by the Crystal River office. The office will handle online ticketing.

The Society is updating and streamlining the long and short term goals into a one page document along with the mission statement

for general distribution.

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 will provide input to DEP on 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.

A stronger relationship is needed with the existing CSOs. Board members will attempt to attend a meeting of each CSO this year. The Society will attempt to gather and consolidate distribution lists from the other CSOs.

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

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.

Aquatic Preserve Society, Inc. – Form 990-N

The fiscal year of the Aquatic Preserve Society coincides with the State of Florida fiscal year, July 1 – June 30. Per the IRS instructions included below, the 990-N electronic filing may not be submitted until after the end of the organization's fiscal year. The Society will provide a copy of that filing when submitted. This will represent the first tax filing by the Society.

This from IRS.GOV

Form 990-N filing due date

Form 990-N is due every year by the 15th day of the 5th month after the close of your [tax year](#). **You cannot file the *e-Postcard* until after your tax year ends.**

Example: If your tax year ended on December 31, the *e-Postcard* is due May 15 of the following year. If the due date falls on a Saturday, Sunday, or legal holiday, the due date is the next business day.

If your 990-N is late, the IRS will send a reminder notice to the last address we received.

While there is no penalty assessment for filing Form 990-N late, organizations that fail to file required Forms 990, 990-EZ or 990-N for three consecutive years will [automatically lose their tax-exempt status](#). Revocation of the organization's tax-exempt status will happen on the filing due date of the third consecutively-missed year. Watch this IRS [YouTube presentation](#) for more information.

Information you will need when filing Form 990-N