



**Florida Department of Environmental Protection
CITIZEN SUPPORT ORGANIZATION
2024 LEGISLATIVE REPORT
(pursuant to Section 20.058 Florida Statutes)**

Citizen Support Organization (CSO) Name: Estero Bay Buddies, Inc.

Mailing Address: 144 BayMar Drive, Fort Myers Beach, Florida 33931

Telephone Number: 239-530-1005

Website Address (*required if applicable*): www.esterobaybuddies.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 Department's website.

YOUR MISSION AND LAST CALENDAR YEAR'S PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

CSO's Mission: (Consistent with your Articles and Bylaws)

The Estero Bay Buddies (EBB) are a not-for-profit Citizen Support Organization (CSO) for the Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve and Estero Bay Preserve State Park. The mission of the EBB is to support the further protection, conservation, restoration, management, and the enhancement of the natural and cultural resources of the coastal and aquatic ecosystems of the Estero Bay Estuary and watershed for the enjoyment and appreciation of current and future generations.

Describe Last Calendar Year's Results Obtained: Brag! (List or discuss the past calendar year's accomplishments and contributions. Cite specific support from last calendar year's Annual Program Plan.)

The Buddies continue to support the ORCP office by providing financial support as well as supporting the Estero Bay State Park with funding for small projects.

Eighteen months after Hurricane Ian the Buddies are proud to finally attend outreach events with shared tools and information from partners in the education, sports, and environmental fields to get the word out about the pleasures of fishing, boating, and bird watching on Estero Bay.

The Buddies like many others are still in recovery mode from Hurricane Ian and are building supplies, flyers, and other information for public outreach, cleanup days, and environmental information days.

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

Estero Bay Buddies will continue to support the ORCP office with funding, support events to promote the Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve and resume a public outreach program. Purchasing our needed supplies for educational outreach is essential for the next few years.

The Buddies have started to attend public speaking events for local organizations to educate new residents moving into the area about the Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve. The Buddies need to double these events in the next three years.

Public outreach events will also be doubled with new tools and information in the next three years.

Partnerships will continue with FGCU, Florida Southwestern State College, Keep Lee County Beautiful and Lee County Schools as well as other local service and not for profit groups.

CSO's LAST CALENDAR YEAR STATISTICS:

Total Number of CSO General Membership: 52

Total Number of Board of Directors: 5

Total Volunteer Hours for the Board of Directors: 124

ORCP & CSO Relationship:

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

Below Describe the relationships.

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?

The Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve and Estero Bay Buddies have continued to work well together and coordinate closely to both accomplish the goals set out in the EBAP Management Plan and to fulfill the EBB mission. EBB continues to utilize its unique role in the community to educate the public about EBAP and the state's aquatic preserve program through outreach materials such as their EbbTide newsletter and Adopt-a-Nest program.

As such, the Estero Bay Buddies remain a vital support tool for the Estero Bay Aquatic Preserve. They have also enabled staff to replenish needed outreach materials that were lost during Hurricane Ian even while working to rebuild their own, and have managed to provide persistent support for the volunteers involved in EBAP monitoring programs.

Despite the ongoing impacts and challenges of recent years, EBB continues to support EBAP programs and has maintained successful communication and close coordination with ORCP.

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?

Estero Bay Buddies continue to have a great working relationship with the ORCP office. When any of the board members call or email the office, we always get an immediate or prompt response. Any comments or ideas are graciously accepted.

The Estero Bay Buddies would not have been able to attend public outreach events this last year without the support and shared equipment of the ORCP office. We now have a future direction with the help of the staff and it is greatly appreciated.

This is an open and transparent relationship, and we see it continuing as such into the future.

SUMMARIZE FINANCIAL ACTIVITY FOR LAST CALENDAR YEAR, DIRECT AP(S) SUPPORT & REVENUES: Program

Services are costs related to providing your organizations' 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. **Do not use commas.**

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.	\$	65.00
Programing/interpretation support material purchases	\$	
Other program services	\$	251.00
Total Program Service Expenses	\$	316.00

Visitor Services Revenue are revenues and the sources generated from fundraising on preserve property. **Do not use commas.**

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, Wifi, etc.)	\$	
Rentals (e.g., bikes, canoe, kayak, SUPs, etc.)	\$	
In-preserve donation boxes	\$	
Other visitor services revenue	\$	
Total Visitor Services Revenue	\$	0

NET ASSETS: 11,360.00

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) \$ 316.00

Are the CSO's annual total expenses \$300,000 including grants? Then Section 215.981(2), Florida Statute requires an independent CPA 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 ATTACHEMENTS:

- 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, attache the IRS 8868 receipt and the most recent complete 990 and schedules.**

2024 CSO Legislative Report Acknowledgment

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

Signature:

Print name: Teresa Cain , CSO President

Estero Bay Buddies , Inc.

Date: 05/22/24

Signature: **Stephanie Erickson** Digitally signed by Stephanie Erickson
Date: 2024.05.22 12:45:43-04'00'

Print Name: Stephanie Erickson , AP Manager

Date: 05/22/24



**ESTERO BAY BUDDIES
CODE OF ETHICS
2024**

PREAMBLE

(1) It is essential to the proper conduct and operation of the Estero Bay Buddies (herein “CSO”) that its board members, officers, and employees be independent and impartial and that their position is not 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 Estero Bay Buddies 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. Post-Office/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 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.

10. Certification of Compliance

Annually, after the end of each fiscal year each board member shall certify compliance with this policy by signing the form prescribed by the treasurer.



Confirmation

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

- **Organization Name:** ESTERO BAY BUDDIES INC
- **EIN:** 650902021
- **Tax Year:** 2023
- **Tax Year Start Date:** 01-01-2023
- **Tax Year End Date:** 12-31-2023
- **Submission ID:** 10065520240577467896
- **Filing Status Date:** 02-26-2024
- **Filing Status:** Accepted

MANAGE FORM 990-N SUBMISSIONS